

## Rue by orphan\_account

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** Angst, Angst and Hurt/Comfort, Boys In Love, Boys Kissing, First Kiss, Fluff, Fluff and Angst, Gay Mike Wheeler, Gay Will Byers, Idiots in Love, Internalized Homophobia, M/M, Mike Wheeler Being an Idiot, Mike Wheeler Loves Will Byers, Protective Mike Wheeler, Will Byers Has Nightmares, Will Byers Has PTSD, Will Byers Has Powers, Will Byers Loves Mike Wheeler

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Dustin Henderson, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Karen Wheeler, Lonnie Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Robin Buckley, Steve Harrington, Troy Walsh (Stranger Things), Will Byers

**Relationships:** Eleven | Jane Hopper & Mike Wheeler, Will Byers & Eleven | Jane Hopper, Will Byers & Mike Wheeler, Will Byers/Mike Wheeler

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**Summary:**

" Mike... I love you too."

Mike furrows his eyebrows, and can feel the pit in his stomach growing larger.

No, no, no. What was she doing? She broke up with him.

Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck.

# 1. Girls-Girl in Red

## Author's Note:

um, hi! Each chapter of the book will have a song title because idk about y'all but reading with a playlist is my favourite thing ever lmao <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=25441e182ad04f31>  
also I wrote this a couple of months ago and brought it over from wattpad so the writing might not be very good but yknow :)

" Mike... I love you too."

Mike furrows his eyebrows, and can feel the pit in his stomach growing larger.

No, no, no. What was she doing? She broke up with him.

*Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck.*

She put her hand on his cheek and her lips came clashing into his as he stood frozen, his eyes widened.

He knew he should kiss back, any other normal teenage boy would have, but he stood still, his feet planted firmly into the ground.

If there was an award for the most awkward kiss, this would be the winner. El did not seem to notice that her boyfriend wasn't kissing back. Ex-boyfriend? Mike didn't even know anymore.

Eleven pulled away her rosy lips pressed into a sweet hopeful smile and walked away closing her eyes happily, leaving Mike standing by the old, opened closet.

*You should have kissed her back. You love her* , Mike told himself, but he knew he couldn't lie to himself anymore.

Trying to force his feelings onto El clearly hadn't worked, it just fucked things up even more. It messed up his friendships, his friends growing more annoyed each time the so-called couple cancelled just so they could make out for hours on end.

If anything, his plan had backfired.

He tried so hard to convince other people that he was straight.

*Micheal Wheeler is straight!* He felt like shouting from the rooftops, but that was just a big lie. He even tried to convince *himself* that he was straight. And surprisingly it had worked.

But not for very long and not very well.

And *Will*. He had ruined everything with Will. He had just wanted to play DnD, but Mike had ruined that too, along with their friendship.

He wishes he could just tell Will the truth. That he had been yelling those things about *himself*. In reality, Mike just wanted to play DnD again too, without a care or worry in the world. He wished things could go back to the way they were, when things were normal.

When it was just him and Lucas and Will and Dustin playing DnD for hours on end.

Without worrying about Mindflayers, and the Upside Down and *his feelings*. Things weren't nearly as complicated. Mike had assumed he liked girls. Of course he did! Why wouldn't he?

Being anything else wasn't an option.

Being queer was frowned upon, it wasn't *normal*.

Yet, here he was, knowing that he had run out of excuses and lies and all the other bullshit he used to tell himself. Micheal Wheeler was not in fact straight. He wasn't in love with El. And his feelings for Will, his *best friend who was a boy* was still there.

Fuck.

Mike leaned against the wall next to the opened closet.

*How fucking ironic.*

El kissed him and now he had to pretend all over again.

He didn't want to keep messing with her feelings, stringing her along, just so he could seem straight.

But that wouldn't matter now right? They were moving away.

They would visit in November or at the latest, March, when it was Will's birthday.

He didn't have to worry about that stuff now right?

---

( MARCH)

*Wrong.*

Everything was going wrong.

Mike found himself daydreaming about Will during class, getting told by grumpy teachers to focus on multiple occasions.

Many occasions.

He found himself thinking about Will more than ever before.

Even his friends noticed.

Take this lunch for example.

The Party sat in the cafeteria, on hard, uncomfortable plastic benches. The booming chatter was deafening, it was a wonder that Mike could still zone out in all the ruckus.

“ Mike.”

“ Mike.”

“Mike!”

Mike’s arm jerked in surprise, spilling water all over Max’s sweater.

“ Huh?!” he asked, blinking.

“ What’s wrong, man? You’ve been acting like this for months!” Lucas questioned him.

“ You mean being a dumbass? Pretty sure Mike was born like that.” Max cut in, taking off her sweater and attempting to blot out the spill with the school’s shitty brown paper towels..

Mike rolled his eyes, annoyed, and ignored her, “ What do you mean?” he asked Lucas, sighing.

“ You’re either always zoning off and not talking, or-”

“ Being an asshole.” Max finished.

“ Shut up, Max.” Dustin hissed, but then turned to Mike,” Or yeah being an asshole.”

Max threw her hands up, “ I literally just said that!”

Mike furrowed his eyebrows,” I have no idea what either of you guys are talking about, nothing’s wrong.”

“ Okay, whatever you say Mike.” Lucas breathed and took a big bite of his sandwich.

*If only they knew.*

Mike was wondering what it would be like to *kiss* Will. He wondered if he would feel *something*. Whenever he kissed El he felt nothing. It wasn’t like in the movies at all, where the characters would feel happy or lovey or whatever they felt in the movies.

*Movies are fake, that doesn’t mean you don’t like El.*

Shit. He was doing it again. He was trying to convince himself that he liked girls again. He kept doing that, holding onto hope that *maybe*,

just maybe he wasn't queer.

He did it even though he knew he was lying, as if it could change something.

*Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck.*

"Aren't you going to the Byers house soon?" Dustin asked, interrupting his thoughts.

*Oh.*

*Shit.*

"Yeah," Mike affirmed, giving him a curt nod.

"You don't seem so excited," Max remarked.

"Oh I'm sorry, I'm not hyperventilating in excitement like a six year old." Mike shot back.

"Jeez, asshole."

Lucas and Dustin rolled their eyes in annoyance from their bickering.

Luckily, the bell rang and Mike quickly escaped, fleeing out the cafeteria doors.

"Who stuck a stick up his ass?"

"He's probably mad he can't see El or something." Lucas answered.

---

"Mike? Can you stay for a second?" Ms. Smith asked from her desk.

Mike closed his eyes and exhaled through his nose.

*Shit.*

God, he hated her and her stupid boring lectures so much.

Mike turned around dragging his feet against the floor, his shoes

squeaking against the shiny tiles.

Ms. Smith pushed a piece of paper, wordlessly across the desk.

*His report card.*

*Fuckkkk.*

He had forgotten that it was report card season.

Mike gulped looking down at his scuffed out shoes.

“ Would you care to explain why you have C’s and F’s?” Ms. Smith asked. Mike used to be one of his best students, getting A’s and B’s for every project.

Mike just shrugged, still casting his gaze at his shoes.

His mom was going to be pissed.

---

The Wheelers were eating supper, the whole family at the table. Nancy was even here, coming home from college just for the weekend.

Holly talked excitedly to her big sister, while Mike tapped his fork against his plate anxiously.

Ms. Smith could call at any moment dropping the bomb.

“ What’s wrong with the chicken, Micheal? Do you not like it?” Karen asked.

“ S’fine.”

“ Then what’s got you so on edge?” Karen asked, concerned.

Mike opened his mouth to answer, when the phone rang.

Mike closed his eyes preparing for the yelling that would happen.

“ Excuse me,” Mrs. Wheeler excused herself, getting up from the table, her skirt brushing against the floor as she hurried.

“ Hello?”

...

“ Yes, this is her.”

...

*Oh man, here it comes.*

Mike watched as her face twisted into shock, anger and disappointment all at once.

“ Really? I can’t believe it. Mhm. I will. Yes. Thank you. Goodbye.” She sharply, hung up the phone quickly.

“Would you like to tell your father how you did on your report card?”

Nancy glanced up, hearing the intensity in her mother’s voice. She couldn’t help but feel bad for Mike, he slumped in his chair, and she noticed how exhausted he looked.

When Mike didn’t answer, Mrs. Wheeler turned to her husband angrily, “ C’s and F’s!” she exclaimed.

Ted shook his head, “ I can’t believe you, Micheal. You should know better.”

“ I think he ought to cancel his trip to the Byers.” Karen said, “ He shouldn't be getting these grades.”

Mike sat up quickly, “ What?! No! It’s Will’s birthday!”

“ Will? The queer?” Ted asked.

Nancy's eyes widened and Holly began to whimper at all the yelling.

Nancy couldn’t help but notice how Mike flinched back into his chair like he’d been punched. He was upset and angry before, but now it



looked like he was hurt, like Ted had called *him* queer instead of Will.

Mike felt hot, tears threatening to escape, and he got up, his chair screeching against the floor, making a loud unpleasant noise.

“ F-fuck you! You never gave a shit about me until now! It’s bullshit!”

He stormed upstairs as Ted shouted up, “ Language!”

## 2. A shitty gay song about you-Smoothboi Ezra

### Summary for the Chapter:

It was what was in the letter that surprised her, she expected to see subjects about comic books and highschool and DnD, not love confessions.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=14c133b1b1b04e5c>

It was several hours after the argument, the sun had set, and the streetlights began to turn on, their dim light illuminating the streets below.

Mike was sitting at his old childhood desk writing a letter to Will.

They didn't really call each other on the phones very often, because their parents got upset when the phone bill was high.

And it was just *awkward*.

Neither of them really knew what to say, giving half-hearted answers and trying to make small talk.

Mike had talked to El a couple of times, too, mostly her talking about how excited and nervous she was about going to school soon. Joyce had finally managed to catch her up somewhat, so now she was going to school the week before Mike came.

Mike recalled the last time she called, things had been going pretty decently until they were about to hang up.

“ Mike?”

“ Uh, yeah?”

“ I love you.”

*Fuckkkk.*

“ I, um, uh, I love you, too. “Mike sputtered and quickly hung the phone.

He rubbed his eyes and whispered “ *Shit*”, instantly regretting what he said.

Each day he stalled, it was harder and harder to tell her that he didn’t love her *like that*.

He just wanted to be *friends*. Not this.

Nancy barged into Mike’s room loudly, making him jump slightly.

“ You’re supposed to knock.” He muttered in annoyance.

“ Whatever. Anyways, you’re lucky I’m a good sister.”

“ Why,exactly?”

“ Because I managed to convince Mom to let you go to the Byers still.” Nancy said, smiling proudly.

“ Really!? Thanks.” Mike said, smiling gratefully.

“ What are you writing?”

“ Nothing.” Mike answered quickly, putting his arm on the sheet of paper.

Nancy hovered over him for a moment before she began walking mindlessly around his room, so he turned back to his letter.

*What to write?*

He tapped his pencil against his desk, thinking when Nancy asked, interrupting his thoughts, “ What’s these papers?” she said, pointing at a small stack of crumpled papers sitting on his bed.

Without looking up Mike mumbled,” Homework.”

Nancy skimmed through the papers expecting to see boring math equations and science but her eyes widened when realized what it was.

They were letters to Will, which wasn't much of a surprise, she knew they were writing to each other.

It was what was in the letter that surprised her, she expected to see subjects about comic books and highschool and DnD, not *love confessions*.

And especially not about his *best friend*.

She noticed the dates at the top were dating from September to now.

*He must have not sent them.*

Mike stopped thinking when he realized how *quiet* it was.

Nancy usually bombarded him with questions, about old teachers, school clubs, basically boring school stuff he never gave a shit about.

Wait-his homework was already in his backpack, his mom had pestered him just as he got home, to finish it.

*Fuck, fuck, fuck.*

“ Wait, Nancy-!” Mike exclaimed, standing up so quickly it almost made him dizzy.

Nancy turned to him, her eyes wide in shock.

Nancy had *read them*.

The letters that had never meant to be seen by *anyone*.

But now she *knew*.

*No,no,no.*

“I-”

Mike can feel his face growing warmer by the second, his voice caught in his throat.

He can feel his chin quivering and his body shaking, as his heart hammers in his chest.

*Do not fucking cry.*

“Hey,” Nancy whispered, pulling him into a hug, “ It’s okay, Mike. I won’t tell anyone, I promise.”

“ You hate me.” Mike sobbed, choking as he spoke, “I’m disgusting.”

“Don’t ever talk like that about yourself!” Nancy exclaimed, before adding softly, “ I’ve always hated you, I’m your big sister it’s my job.”

Mike laughed through his tears and pushed her away before flopping on his bed.

“ Are you gonna give him the letters?” Nancy asked.

“ No.”

“ Why not?”

Mike sat up, tears still rolling down his cheeks, “Why do you think?” he snapped, “ So I can ruin our friendship just because I’m a some stupid queer with some stupid crush in him?!” he laughed sarcastically.

“ You’re not stupid. Maybe he likes you back.” Nancy suggested.

“ Yeah, right. Because life’s a fairytale.” Mike mumbled, as he flopped back onto his bed again.

Nancy wasn’t really sure what to say, she fiddled with her fingers, “ Look, just don’t beat yourself over it, okay?”

“Mhm.”

*Too late for that.*

Nancy wavered for a moment before walking out and closing the door behind.

*Fuck.*

She *knew*.

Mike sighed, before glaring at the letters next to him.

God, why was he stupid?

He didn't mean to write love letters. Only kids in the second grade with silly crushes did that. It just kinda happened.

He shouldn't have protested when his mom had mentioned cancelling plans to go to the Byer's house. It would've been so much easier.

And now he had to pretend that everything was normal.

He crumpled the letters into a ball before tossing it into his garbage, and sighing again.

---

Mike sat down at the party's usual table in the cafeteria where Lucas was already sitting.

"What's up with you? You look like shit."

Mike gave him a sarcastic smile, "Gee, thanks. You look great too."

Mike did look pretty exhausted though, his hair was a mess, more than usual, and dark circles were the result of having yet *another* sleepless night.

Lucas gave him one last before saying, "Whatever. Wanna come to the video store with us after school?"

"Sure." Mike agreed and slumped into his arms.

"Uh oh! Someone didn't get enough beauty sleep last night!" Max

teased joining them at the table, “ Where’s Dustin?”

“ Getting food, he’s been at the line-up for five minutes now.” Lucas informed her.

Max wrinkled her nose, “ He’s actually willing to buy and eat that shit?”

“ Yup. Forgot his lunch and didn’t eat breakfast.”

“ Oh.”

“ Yup. Wanna come with us to the video store after school?”

Max nodded and began to eat.

Dustin joined their table shortly after in a huff, and Mike looked up as he sat next to him.

“ Why didn’t you eat breakfast?”

“ Because I was trying to fix Cerebro this morning.”

“ Your radio?” Max asked, “ What’s wrong with it?”

“ Are you forgetting the fact that a bunch of stupid teenagers broke it a couple months ago?” Dustin huffed, annoyed.

“ That was months ago, why are you trying to fix it now?”

“ Because I felt like it, Max.”

“ Jeez, you guys are all grumps today.”

“ You’d be too, if you had to eat this shit.” Dustin said grimacing looking at the food.

“ You’re coming to the video store with us, right?”

“ Yup, just like old times.” Dustin answered smiling.

*Old times.*

Mike missed those times.

Instead of being at someone's house everyday after school, the party only really hung out with each other during lunch.

The *remaining party members*.

Everyone was either busy with new clubs they joined, or homework.

Mike wished everything was like before, when everything was easier.

He knew why Will didn't want to grow up. He didn't want to either.

---

" Steve!"

" Henderson!"

Lucas, Mike and Max watched as Steve and Dustin had a reunion in the middle of the store.

" I forgot he worked here." Max muttered under her breath.

" Me too. They act like they're brothers or something." Lucas added.

" More like mother and son" Mike comments, rolling his eyes and Robin who was nearby, heard and snorted, " You got that right. Those dinguses are like glue." she crossed her fingers, " Goddamn glue."

Dustin and Steve began to talk about *something* , so the rest of the party let the two be and browsed mindlessly through the rows of VHS tapes.

Lucas and Max trailed away from Mike talking about something.

Mike walked along the aisles looking for nothing in particular, when a song came on the radio, booming through the store that he recognized.

He was pretty sure it was one of Will's favourite songs.

" Should I stay or should I go." Mike murmured, remembering the name.



God, why did everything make him think about Will?

He rubbed his face with his hand and groaned in frustration.

“You good there, Wheeler?” Robin asked coming down the aisle

“ Huh?” Mike said, looking up, “ Yup, I’m fine.”

“ Don’t look fine to me.”

“ Well I am.”

“ If ya say so.” She replied and stamped on a price sticker with a pricing gun on his forehead.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

i love nancy and robin sm hdsfkslkf  
fingers crossed that this chapter posted properly

### 3. Talk to me-Cavetown

#### Summary for the Chapter:

“ But isn’t everyone gay?”

Will looked up at her in surprise, “ What?! Of course not.”

#### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=f557c38f7fb14d32>

Will glanced up from his bowl of cereal as El walked in the kitchen.

She sat down next to him wordlessly, and put milk into her bowl and then poured in Cheerios.

“ Worried about school?” Will asked her.

She nodded and Will responded, “ Don’t worry, you’ll do fine. Most of your classes are with me anyways.”

“ Okay.” She answered, still unsure.

They ate in silence until, Will got up from his chair and glanced at the clock, “ We should get going soon.”

Eleven put her bowl into the sink and got her backpack filled with all the school supplies she needed and followed Will out the door.

Will walked through school, El trailing beside him, looking around in awe.

The only time she had been around *this* many people was when she went to the mall with Max, and she smiled slightly at the memory.

She remembered what Joyce had said last night before she went to

bed,” You’ll make friends in no time.”

El was beginning to believe it, how hard was it to make friends when there were *this* many people?

Will stopped every so often to say things like, “ Be careful with those girls. They’re always gossiping about other people and up in everyone’s business.” or, “ That’s the science lab, we’ll be going there sixth period.”

Eleven listened obediently, nodding along, trying to remember everything.

When they had finally reached their red, rusted lockers, Will asked, “ You remember how to use the lock, right?”

El sighed, beginning to get fed up with all the questions, “ Yes, *Will*. ”

“ Sorry, I’m just nervous that’s all.”

“ But you’ve been to school before.” El pointed out.

Will gave out an airy laugh, “ Yeah. I guess.”

Eleven gave a small triumphant cheer when she unlocked her locker before Will, “ See?”

When Will didn’t answer she turned to him and noticed he was reading a wrinkled piece of paper. His face was slightly pale and she noticed that he bit his lip- something that he usually only did when he was upset or worried.

“ What’s wrong?”

“ Nothing!” Will said quickly, crumpling up the paper and throwing it into his backpack.

“ *Will*- ”

“ Yeah, I know, friends don’t lie.” He replied sharply.

El flinched slightly at his small outburst, and the school bell rang,

making her cover her ears at the sound.

Will exhaled and said, “ Sorry. It’s nothing. Really.”

“ It’s okay.”

---

Eleven and Will sat at the school’s library during lunch, eating their lunches in silence. The first block of school went pretty shitty for them.

The teacher had made El go to the front of the class to tell her classmates about herself, which she was *not* prepared for.

“ You were homeschooled until now?” A girl who El remembered Will telling her to avoid, asked incredulously, “ What are you stupid or something?”

El’s eyes had widened in surprise, she was *not* stupid, “ No.”, she glared, “ Not stupid.”

The girl and her friends giggled, as Will watched it all unfold from the back of the class. He had a feeling that the rest of the day wouldn’t go much better for her.

El broke the silence by asking, “ What was in your locker?”

Will sighed saying, “ It’s nothing, El. Really.” he insisted.

“No it’s not. It made you sad.”

He sighed again, knowing that Eleven would ask for the rest of the day. She always wanted to be in the loop about things, and always cared, wanting everyone to feel happy.

He shoved his lunch aside and picked up his backpack, rummaging through it until he found what he was looking for.

“ Here.” He mumbled, tossing her the crumpled note, from across the

table.

El unfolded it, her eyebrows creasing in confusion, “ What does *fag* mean?”

“ It’s a rude word to call someone who’s gay.” Will muttered, he *did not* want to have this conversation.

“ But why?” she persisted, not understanding.

“ Because people are mean, and like making other people’s lives miserable.” he said blatantly.

“ But isn’t everyone gay?”

Will looked up at her in surprise, “ What?! Of course not.”

“ But I’m gay.” and before Will could say anything she said, “ Jonathan said I was gay.”

*What?*

El must’ve been confused with what Jonathan was talking about.

“ El, do you even *know* what gay means?” Will asked, at last.

“ Yes. It means happy.”

*Ohhhh.*

How was Will supposed to explain this to her?

“ El, it doesn’t really mean that anymore, I mean, it was at one point, but it’s different now.” Will rambled on.

“ What?” El was getting more confused by the second, “ What does it mean then?”

“ It means, like, boys who like boys, or girls who like girls. And people think that it’s bad.”

El blinked for a moment and asked, “ Why is it bad? “

Will exhaled, “ It’s not. People are just stupid.”

“ But why? Why do people think it’s bad?” she persisted, growing slightly frustrated.

“ Because people don’t think it’s normal, they think being gay is gross, like a sickness or something.”

“ A sickness?” El repeated, her eyes widening.

“ It’s not! People just think it is, because they think that anything that’s not normal is bad.” Will quickly reassured her.

“ Oh.” Eleven said, nodding her head slowly, beginning to understand. “ Why did someone put this in your locker then?” she said pointing at the crumpled paper.

“ I don’t know.”

Will knew that explaining that to her would be a whole other discussion, and he didn’t have the energy to explain it to her.

And honestly, he wasn’t sure why people thought he was gay. He didn’t think he acted much different from all the other boys.

The lunch bell rang, signalling that it was time to get back to class, and Will sighed again, for about the millionth time that day.

---

Will walked out of the bathroom, his towel wrapped around him. His skin was still slightly tinted a pink from the hot shower he took.

He hated feeling cold. It reminded it of *him*.

The Mind Flayer.

He hated the way it reminded him of the feeling of the cold, evil energy that seeped through his veins while he was possessed. The way he felt dead but still alive.

It reminded him of the long, frightening days in the Upside Down. It was always so dark and frigid he could never really tell if it was day or night.

Even though Will knew he was safe, the Mind Flayer had been defeated, he wasn't in the Upside Down, and he and his family moved far away from Hawkins, all the memories loomed over him still.

He now avoided the cold at all costs, tons of blankets and layers of sweaters.

Will went into his room and got changed into his pyjamas, collapsing onto his bed in exhaustion even though all he had done was going to school.

He couldn't wait until the break, but he still slightly dreaded it.

Mike was coming over, so he should be excited, *right* ? He was his best friend, after all.

But he couldn't help the nervousness, they barely ever called each other and when they did they spoke to each other as if they were strangers.

Will had tried to make conversation with Mike, but it was just so, so awkward.

Will wasn't sure why.

He *thought* that they had made up, and were okay, before he moved, but now he wasn't sure.

Will rolled over, lazily, looking at the red blinking numbers on his digital clock. 9:23 pm.

Joyce usually worked later on Monday nights, but usually never *this* late.

He got out of bed and walked into the kitchen, and picked up the phone, about to call his mom just in case. He always got worried about things like this.

He heard El's instead through the phone.

"Mike?"

*Oh, they must have been calling each other.* Will was about to put down the receiver when Mike's voice answered.

"Yeah?"

"I love you."

"Um, I love you too."

Will's stomach knotted up and he slammed down the receiver.

He hates that he feels jealous. Why can't he just let Eleven feel happy, without *him* wishing that Mike was the one saying it to *him* ?

Tears sting the corners of his eyes, threatening to escape. *God* , why did he have to feel this way?

His head began to hurt, feeling like it was almost blurry, his thoughts swimming.

The feeling had been happening more and more recently, and he wasn't sure why.

---

"*Shit* " Mike whispered, rubbing his eyes.

He sat down at his desk knowing that he should finish his homework, but he had absolutely no motivation.

He sighed, about to give in, when the lamp at his desk began to blink on and off.

Mike furrowed his eyebrows and muttered, "Piece of shit."

It reminded how Mrs. Byers had told them all about how Will could 'talk' through the *lights* .

Mike ignored it and turned back to his homework.



*It was probably nothing.*

## 4. Smalltown boy-Bronski beat

### Summary for the Chapter:

“ Mike?” Eleven asked suddenly.

“ Yeah?”

“ Are you still my boyfriend?” She asked him.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=33d9796ce02f43ef>

Mike stood at the bus stop with his suitcase beside him, waiting for the bus to arrive.

He crossed his arms against himself in an attempt to shield himself from the wind. It was much windier and chillier than most days in March. The gloomy weather seemed to match his mood.

He tapped his foot anxiously against the ground, glancing every so often to see if the bus would arrive.

*God* , why did he have to feel so nervous? Will was his best friend; it wasn't a big deal.

*Maybe he should just turn around and go home.*

“ Stop being fucking stupid, it's going to go fine.” He muttered under his breath to himself, “ Stop being so dramatic.”

His thoughts were interrupted when he heard someone walking down the street, their footsteps echoing against the road. He looked up, and squinted to see who it was.

*Fuck.*

*Of course.*

Troy.

Mike exhaled through his nose, praying that Troy would *somehow* not see him.

But of course, “ Wheeler! Going to visit your faggy boyfriend?” he shouted, smirking.

*How did he even know he was going to visit Will?*

Mike glared at him and deadpanned, “ You’re so funny, Troy.”

“ So he *is* your boyfriend! You didn’t deny it! Who would’ve thought you’d be a fairy, too?” He laughed haughtily.

“ Why are you so interested anyway? Do you like me or something?” Mike shot back, trying to pretend that the slurs didn’t bother him even though they *did*.

Mike could see his face become bright red, even from across the street.

“ What the fuck?! No! That’s disgusting!” Troy spluttered, his face twisting in disgust.

“ Then shut the fuck up and leave me alone!”

*What a fucking dick.*

Mike sighed in relief, when Troy ran away.

But then his thoughts came back, making him feel more stressed and anxious than before.

“ Stop it.” He whispered.

*You just don’t want to face your feelings.*

He glanced in the direction of his house, tempted to turn around and go back home. Everything would be easier there.

Mike was torn between staying and going, he had been wanting to visit the Byers’ for a while, missing them immediately ever since they moved away. But going meant having to pretend everything was fine,

pretending to be in love with a girl he had absolutely no attraction to, pretending to not be in love with the boy he *shouldn't* be in love with.

The bus came into view, tires screeching to a halt in front of him.

Mike gave one last glance to his house, uncertainly.

*Just go you fucking pussy, you've been wanting to visit for months.*

The bus' doors opened, screeching from the years of use and rust, and he went inside before he could change his mind again.

The bus was much warmer than outside, blocking the wind from coming inside. Mike sighed as he sat down in a hard plastic chair, leaning his head against the window, preparing for the long trip ahead of him.

*Great, now you have the whole ride to worry.*

That wasn't the case though, he ended up falling asleep for most of the ride. His cheek was mashed into the window, the bus almost throwing him into the seat in front of him when it came to a halt.

When he got out of the bus he stretched his stiff, tired legs and pulled out the address that the Byers had given to him.

The sun was beginning growing dimmer, the soft light casting shadows everywhere. Wind chimes clanging together in the distance.

It surprisingly wasn't too hard to find their house, Mike only got lost once when he went down the wrong street.

Mike observed his surroundings, the neighbourhood wasn't anything special. He noticed that there was the occasional missing dog poster tacked onto lamp posts. He passed a forest and the memories of the day him and Will fought came back to him. His stomach twisted, feeling guilty, as he clutched his suitcase even harder.

He finally reached the house. It seemed to be just as small as their old house, but slightly more updated. It looked more upkeep and proper which made sense considering all the events and disasters their old

house had faced.

Mike let out a shaky breath as he stood outside their house about to knock, *Why the fuck are you so nervous?*

Mike knocked on the door, waiting for a moment until the door swung open.

“ Hi Mike!” Joyce said smiling.

“ Hi, Ms. Byers.” Mike said, giving her a smile in return.

She opened the door wider, ushering him in. “ El! Mike’s here!” She called.

Joyce turned back to him and smiled again, and Mike could notice all the faint wrinkles that had appeared over time from all the stress.

“ How’s Hawkins?” She asked.

“ Um, pretty good. The same as usual.”

*The same usual bullshit.*

“ That’s nice. “ She said, patting her pockets, looking for her keys, “ I’d love to talk more, but I promised I’d talk to El’s teachers today. El should be here soon”

She noticed the keys sitting on the counter, so she scooped them up and called as she went out the door. “ I shouldn’t be out for too late!”

The door slammed behind her, and Mike stood awkwardly in the kitchen of the Byers house.

Mike glanced up when he heard shuffling coming from the hallway.

*Eleven.*

“ Hi.” El said, giving a grin.

“ Uh, hi.”

“ I missed you.” Mike averted his eyes to ground and answered, “ Uh,

yeah. Me too.”

“ Want me to show you the house?” She asked.

“ Okay.” Mike agreed.

She showed him around the house, and Mike noticed that it was quite similar to their old one. It was still quite small, but more homey, and the wallpaper was more vibrant and updated too. They still, however, had the same beaten up furniture, they had had for several years before.

She stopped when they had reached her room, “ This is my room,” she said, with slight pride. It wasn’t the room at Brenner’s Lab, it wasn’t the Wheeler’s basement, or Hopper’s cabin room. It was *hers*. Joyce had let her decorate her room any way she wanted, but it was still quite simple. With light purple colored drapes, and striped wallpaper that reminded Mike of Nancy’s room.

“ It’s really nice,” Mike said, giving her a smile and her grin grew larger.

They sat on her bed talking for a while, and things were going pretty well.

*See, you were nervous about nothing.*

“ Mike?” Eleven asked suddenly.

“ Yeah?”

“ Are you still my boyfriend?” She asked him.

*Shit.*

“ Um. I think maybe it’s better if we’re just friends, right?” Mike stammered nervously, “ I mean, uh, you’re really cool and everything and stuff and it’s just that-”

“ Mike.” Eleven interrupted him, and Mike looked up at her.

“ Uh, yeah?” he asked, rubbing his neck anxiously.

“ It’s okay.”

“ It’s okay?”

“ Yes.”

“ Oh! Um, okay. Uh, that’s cool.”

They sat on her bed in silence until El asked, remembering the conversation that she and Max had many months ago, “ Am I a bad kisser?”

“ What!? No! Of course not.” *I just don’t like kissing you.*

“ Oh, okay.” She exhaled in relief.

“ Where’s Will?” He asked, trying to sound like he *hadn’t* been dying to ask that for the past twenty minutes.

“ He’s walking the dog.”

“ You guys have a dog?” Mike asked, remembering their old dog in Hawkins.

“ We found it on the streets. Mom said we could keep it until we find it’s owner.”

“ Oh yeah. I remember seeing missing dog posters.”

“ We put them up.” El nodded proudly.

The door slams causing the two teens to jump slightly, and barking echoed through the house.

“ He’s home, come on.” El said, leading him out of the room.

The dog’s paws scratched loudly against the wooden floor as it bounded through the hallway, pulling Will behind him, almost crashing him into Mike.

*Oh shit.*

**Notes for the Chapter:**

i dont think you understand how much i \*had\* to  
add smalltown boy to this playlist lmao

also dont ask me about the random dog, i just had to  
add him in to make the transitions less weird  
shdfkshfk



## 5. Scrawny-Wallows

### Summary for the Chapter:

“ Hey,” Mike says softly, nudging him gently with his elbow, causing Will to inhale sharply in surprise.

“ You okay?”

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=4f3f6a6b2b434336>

Will’s shoes squeaked against the floor, as the medium-sized dog tugged at the leash.

“ Ack! Sorry!” Will squeaked out, his face growing a deep shade of red when he realized him and Mike were only a couple of inches apart. They were so close Will could see the handful of freckles splattered against Mike’s face.

Mike just stood, gawking at Will in return, noticing how his usual ruler-straight hair wasn’t across his forehead like how it had been for all nine years of their friendship. Instead, it was cut much shorter, suiting him much better. He still however, looked pretty much the same as he last saw him, wearing a striped shirt similar to the ones he wore last summer.

Will cast his eyes away in embarrassment, looking back at the chocolate colored dog that was pulling eagerly at the leash.

When Mike realized he was staring his cheeks flushed a similar color to Will’s.

“ Oh, um, hi.”

“ Hi.”

Mike rocked on his feet slightly. *Holy fuck this is embarrassing.*

Luckily El saved the day, saying, “ Look at the doggy. It’s so adorable!” she smiled happily.

“ Yeah.” Mike said softly, glancing at Will who had a small smile on his face. *Oh god, he’s so fucking cute.*

The three of them turn around facing the direction of the front door, hearing the hinges screech open.

“I’m home!” Joyce calls out and the dog tugs free, the leash flying out of Will’s hand, barking loudly.

“ Oh, shoot!” Will mumbles in alarm and Mike laughs softly. Him *never* swearing is clearly something that hasn’t changed either.

Will glances up at him before breaking out into a big grin.

---

Will sits at the table beside Mike, spearing peas onto his fork. His mom is beside at the opposite side of the table with El, asking Mike an excessive amount of questions about Hawkins. Will doesn’t even understand how his mom has so many things to ask, after it is just boring old Hawkins. Besides all the supernatural stuff, of course.

Will glances up in interest when Joyce asks uncertainty, “ Do- do you think the gate could have been opened again.”

Mike shakes his head and swallows before saying, “ No, I don’t think so. Everything’s seemed pretty normal.”

Will can feel himself relax slightly, maybe everything’s just in the past. But his stomach twists for a moment, *what if it’s not?*

*What if nothing’s the same again?*

He shouldn’t think about this now, he’s just freaking himself out even more. He squeezes his eyes shut tightly for a moment. *Everything’s fine.*

“ Hey,” Mike says softly, nudging him gently with his elbow, causing Will to inhale sharply in surprise.

“ You okay?”

“ Yeah, I’m fine.” Will mumbles in humiliation, shifting his gaze to his plate.

Mike glances at him hesitantly one last time, before turning to his as well.

---

“Really Will. It’s fine. I don’t mind sleeping in my sleeping bag.” Mike insisted, giving him a lopsided smile.

“ Are you sure?” Will asked him again.

Mike let out a breathy laugh, “ Yes ! We always used to do it at our sleepovers, remember?”

“ Yeah I remember, but-”

“ Seriously, Will. You’re too nice, I’ll be fine.”

Will sighed, “ Okay.” then flicked off the lightswitch. He clambered over to his bed in the darkness, almost tripping over Mike who was on the floor.

“ Ack! I’m sorry!”

“It’s okay, Will. You don’t have to apologize.”

“Oh, sorry.”

“ Will!” Mike exclaimed, laughing.

“ Sorr- oh shoot!”

Will was grateful the lights were out so Mike couldn’t see his cheeks burning red.

He pulled the many layers of warm blankets over him to shield off any cold as Mike said quietly, "G'night, Will."

" Good night, Mike."

The darkness soon settled in, making Will's stomach churn in uneasiness.

*It'll be fine. Everything's fine. You're not in the Upside Down, you're in your house. It's fine.*

Eventually though, Will had managed to fall asleep- only to be woken up a couple hours later.

He gasped awake, his heart thudding rapidly against his chest.

*It was just a nightmare, you're fine.*

God, it felt so real. The terrors that always poisoned his dreams, and made him feel like he was suffocating when he woke up. Because what if the horrors weren't from his head? What if they had followed him out, too? Tears burned at the corners of his eyes desperate to escape.

Will clutched his blankets in fists as he heard Mike stir in his sleeping bag below.

*Damn it. He had woken him up.*

Mike rubbed the sleepiness out of his eyes, squinting his eyes through the dark to see Will, depending on the little bit of moonlight that streamed through the curtains that was the only source of light. His face instantly softened, when he realized that Will was upset.

" Hey, what's wrong?" Mike whispered.

Will wiped at his eyes, " Nothing. It's nothing." he said, his voice breaking in between.

" It's okay, you can tell me." Mike reassured him.

" It doesn't matter, it's stupid." Will insisted, unconvincingly. *You're*

*not a kid anymore.*

“ It’s not stupid,” Mike paused before saying knowingly, “ I get nightmares sometimes, too, y’know.”

“ Really?”

“ Yeah. With all the shit we’ve been through, of course.”

“ Oh.”

Mike shuffled his sleeping bag closer to his bed, “ We can just talk until you feel asleep, if you want.” he suggests.

“Okay...” Will agrees hesitantly.

“ What’cha wanna talk about?”

Will shrugs even though Mike mostly likely can’t see him, “ I don’t know.”

Mike racks his mind for something, *anything* to talk about.

“ You got a haircut!” He blurts out suddenly, his face flushing pink after he acknowledged what he said.

“ Yeah. I did.” Will pauses before continuing on, “ El wanted me to. She said that getting new clothes with Max and stuff made her happy and that it’ll make me happy too? I don’t know, I didn't really understand.”

Mike laughed softly and then asked him, “Did it?”

“ Did it what?”

“ Make you feel happy?”

“ I don’t know, I guess. El was really excited for some reason, so seeing her happy made me feel happy, too.” Will recalled, smiling slightly at the memories.

“ That’s nice.” Mike said before he added hesitantly, “ It looks good on you, y’know.”

“ Oh,um thanks.” Will replied, feeling his cheeks growing more red by the second.

Mike shifted around his sleeping bag and asked, “ Hey, did the power go out or something?”

“ Huh?”

“ Your clock,” he said nodding towards the digital clock, “ The numbers aren't lit up.”

“ Oh. I dunno.”

The boys continued talking late into the night, just like when they were kids, the clock quickly forgotten.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

rip will's bowlcut.

## 6. Comfort crowd-Conan gray

### Summary for the Chapter:

“ I feel like it’s all my fault.” he whispers, his voice wavering.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=19231067bc964948>

“Mom, me and Mike are gonna go walk the dog.”

Joyce looked up from her cigarette and smiled, peaks of sadness still showing that only Will could notice, “ Okay, have fun.” She just says, Will surprised that she *isn’t* asking him a flurry of questions.

The boys walked out the house, the bright sunlight making them squint.

They walked side by side, silently. Mike trying to ignore the butterflies that are arising in his stomach as he watches the dog waddle in front of them, occasionally getting sidetracked by a random squirrel or bird.

Will’s eyes are trained on the ground, concentrating on kicking the pebble in front of him, refusing to look up.

“ Do you think he has an owner?” Mike asks, nodding towards the dog in an attempt to make conversation.

“ I dunno.” Will replies simply.

*Something’s wrong.*

Mike wordlessly follows Will up a grassy hill that reminds him of the hill that Cerebro was built.

They sit down on the grass, Will hugging his knees to his chest.

“ Hey, are you okay?”

Will turns to look at him, giving him an obvious fake smile, “ Yeah, yeah totally...” He repeats, almost as if he’s trying to convince himself. His smile begins to fade as quickly as it appears.

“It’s just...”

Mike sits up straighter to listen more attentively, it’s a rare occasion for Will to willingly open up about what’s bothering him without Mike pestering him.

“ I feel like it’s all my fault.” he whispers, his voice wavering.

Mike eyebrows furrow in confusion, *what is he talking about ?*

“ I could tell Mom was sad this morning, she almost always is. And it’s all my fault.

“Bob and Hopper are dead and it’s my fault. All because I’m so stupid.” His whole body is shaking now, and tears that he didn’t want to release escape anyways.

“ Will, it’s not your-” Mike begins to say before Will cuts in, “ You don’t understand Mike. I hear her crying when she thinks we can’t hear her, but we can! I can.” Will’s voice breaks, and his chest feels tight, making him choke for air in between words.

Letting out a shaky sigh, he lied down onto the blanket of grass and wildflowers, covering his face with an arm. He hates when people see him cry, when people see him vulnerable. It makes them worry, he’s not *worth* worrying over. Because it’s *his* fault anyways. It makes people treat him like a piece of glass that’s bound to break at any moment. His mom, constantly checking up on him, growing anxious anytime he’s even just a few minutes late. The only reason she hadn’t bombarded him with questions today, *When will you be home at?, Where are you going?, Is something wrong?*, was because she was drowning in *her* own sorrows. Will always wanted to tell her to stop, that all the questions and the constant worrying made him feel like he was suffocating, even though he knew that she only worried because she cared about him, but then it made him feel guilty. The



reason why Hopper and Bob were dead was because of *him*. Because he couldn't go home without messing things up one night because he was so *stupid*.

"Will-" Mike tries to begin before Will interrupts him *once* again," It doesn't matter Mike." he mumbles, "It's fine, *I'm* fine."

" You've already said that! You're clearly not!" He persists.

" Just please Mike, I don't wanna talk about it. I don't know why I even brought it up in the first place." Will begs, rubbing his head as if he has a headache.

Mike's about to press on regardless, but without warning the alarm on his digital watch goes off. The beeping seemed unusually loud, breaking the quiet peace of the meadow.

It scared both of them half to death, Mike exclaiming, " Holy fuck!" and quickly pressing all the buttons in an attempt to turn off the noise.

" Piece of shit! He huffed, annoyed, " I didn't even have an alarm or anything set!"

Mike flops down near Will , and gazes at the big fluffy clouds floating lazily in the sky above. He absentmindedly rips out the grass, twirling a random purple wildflower in between his fingers.

He flicks it at Will making it land on his face, making the boy giggle softly.

" Purple. Your favourite color. " Mike states, turning over to face Will and smiling.

" Yeah." Will breathes.

Mike thinks back to the time when he and Will were younger, much younger, they had to be five or six at the most, when they came and played in a meadow similar to this. *And Will would make flower crowns*, Mike recalls.

" Remember when you made flower crowns when we were little?"

Will turned lazily over facing Mike, his eyebrows creasing together trying to recall the events.

His face erupted into a big smile, a *genuine* smile, when he remembered.

“ Yeah! I’m surprised you still remember that, that was forever ago.” He exclaims.

Mike nodded and continued, “ And you always tried to teach me how to make them-”

“- but you could never figure it out!” Will finished, laughing.

A smile rested on Will’s face as he turned back to look at the sky, Mike’s eyes still admiring the other boy.

The sunlight bathed his skin, making his hazel eyes glint and sparkle in the light, speckles of different shades of greens and browns peeking through his long eyelashes that are caught in one another.

As much as Mike tries to resist he can’t help but glance down at his rosy lips.

He looks so *pretty* , even though you can still see tear tracks staining his flushed cheeks, and his hair was slightly disheveled.

Will glances at Mike for a moment and Mike’s cheeks burn red, and he quickly turns away in embarrassment.

*Shit.*

All the thoughts Mike keeps pushing down emerge, boiling to the surface. *Just like they always do.*

The thoughts Mike tries to keep crammed and locked away even though he knows they're true. *You shouldn't like your best friend like this.*

And now Mike's out in the open, vulnerable, feeling exposed with all these feelings with the boy he's not supposed to be crushing on, but is , right beside him.

*Shit, shit, shit.*

Mike stands up abruptly, “ Can we go now?” he asks almost desperately.

Will glances up at him in slight alarm and quickly agrees, “ Yeah, sure.” and he hastily stood up.

As if on cue, the dog, which had been playing contently in the long grass, trotted up to the boys obediently. And they left the field in a similar fashion as they had arrived, in silence.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

yes i am that person that says will shouldnt suffer in s4, but then turns around and makes him suffer in a fanfic, what about it

## 7. I need to be alone-Girl in red

### Summary for the Chapter:

“ I’m not gonna fall in love” He had said, remembering the conversation that had taken place that day.

What a big lie.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=107d2ccfa40947fc>

Will had messed up. Somehow.

He wasn’t sure what *exactly* he did, but he messed things up.

Mike wasn’t really talking to him at the moment, and he couldn’t figure out why.

Will sighed leaning against the counter. It was too early and exhausting to think about this.

*Whatever, Mike’s always a jerk*, he thinks to himself, internally rolling his eyes.

He had yet another nightmare last night. At least he didn’t wake up Mike that time.

Waking up in the middle of the night because your friend’s too pathetic to even sleep like a normal person must be a crappy way to spend the break. *Thank God he didn’t wake up Mike. He probably would have been in such a pissy mood.*

He retreated his thoughts, flipping over the pancake that was currently burning on the stove.

“ Damn it.” He muttered, glaring at the burnt and charred pancake. The crappy cooking skills had clearly been passed down from Joyce

and Jonathan who couldn't bake anything to save their lives.

Will however, recalls the one time his mom *didn't* completely fail making pancakes.

" *I'm not gonna fall in love*" He had said, remembering the conversation that had taken place that day.

What a big lie. He knew it, he was pretty sure his mom knew it too.

Because *of course* Will had to have a big fat crush on his friend.

He remembered thinking, *hoping*, at the time that it was just gonna be a temporary thing. He would have to move on *at some point* , right?

But nope.

Here he was, still pining over his best friend, getting his hopes up about nothing, per usual.

Mike would never like him back. He was straight. He's dating Eleven.

Well, he had thought that, but El's mentioned that they broke up or something?

It's probably just temporarily though. Soon enough, it'll be just like how last summer had been and they'll go running back to each other and be a couple again.

It's not like Will had anything against love, though, he had just *given up* on it.

His best friend would never like him back. The chances of finding someone who liked him, who was *like him* were slim to none.

Getting his hopes up was hopeless.

At least, that's what had always told himself but yet he still likes to imagine about someone loving him.

He likes to imagine someone caring for him, and doing all the dumb cheesy stuff that all the couple do in the movies. He likes to imagine

dancing with them at school dances, instead of being awkward with some random girl at the Snowball. He likes to imagine someone thinking about him during class, and being just as lovestruck as he would be.

He can't live a fantasy his whole life though. Will saw how that went down when he tried to play DnD last time. When tried to cling onto his childhood for just a little while longer. But even that was still poisoned by the Upside Down.

A creak on the floor boards made Will jerk around, but he quickly relaxed when he realized it was just El.

She was still in her blue pajamas, rubbing the sleep out her eyes.

“What are you doing?” She asked, curiously.

“Making pancakes.”

“Pan-cakes?” She repeated slowly. Even though she was getting better at English, every once in a while she would forget a word. It was okay though, Will usually didn't mind explaining to her what it meant.

“Yeah.” Will smiled, passing her one on a plate, “They're like Eggos, but better.”

Eleven thanked him and took a bite, Will cringing slightly at the fact she didn't put anything on it. No fruit or maple syrup, nothing.

Will turned off the stove and took a pancake as well, adding a generous amount of maple syrup.

“Did Mom leave for work, yet?” She asked him.

“Yup.” He nodded. She had left but not before making sure to worry about him in a million different ways as usual.

Mike emerged from Will's bedroom, and El greeted him cheerfully, “Good morning! Will made pancakes!” she said putting one on a plate for him.

“ ‘Morning.” He greeted, and sat down on a chair next to her.

They would have been sitting in silence without El there. She was chatting about, well, *something* . Will wasn’t quite sure, he was mostly noticing how Mike was giving him the cold shoulder, refusing to meet his gaze.

*God, what did he do wrong?*

He tries to think back to yesterday, trying to replay their conversations in his mind but nothing comes to mind about what he could’ve done to irritate him.

*He probably thinks that you’re being annoying, whining about your problems all the time,* Will thinks, feeling his insecurities rising to the surface.

He bites his lip and taps his fingers anxiously against the wooden table.

“Will!” El interrupts his thoughts.

“Huh?” He asks looking up.

“ Do you wanna watch a movie today?”

Eleven must see the blank expression on his face, so she reminds him, “ Ghostbusters, remember? You wanted me to watch it!”

“ Oh yeah. Sure, okay.” Will agrees.

He had remembered being shocked that El hadn’t seen the movie, so her and Will rented the movie to watch, El being excited since she had only really watched soap operas before. It was probably going to be the perfect day to watch movies anyways, dark rain clouds loomed outside bound to burst at any moment.

Will got out of his chair, grabbing the burnt pancake on the counter and gave it to the dog before burrowing in his room. He wasn’t completely sure if dogs were allowed to eat pancakes, but it scarfed it up regardless.

The rest of the day was pretty uneventful. Will hid out in his room all day, drawing and reading comics to pass the time and distract him from the thunder that rumbled loudly and the rain pattering against the windows.

It's not to say that Will didn't like the rain, it's just that when it was all stormy and cold it reminded him too much of the Upside Down. More and more things seemed to remind him of it, triggering memories he's desperate to forget.

The gloomy weather seemed to match his current mood, though El seemed pretty cheerful, regardless.

El knocks on his door and asks, "Wanna watch the movie now?"

He gives her a small smile and nods.



## 8. Ready to let go-Cage the elephant

### Summary for the Chapter:

Mike froze when he felt an unexpected weight on his shoulder.

Oh shit, holy fuck, oh fucking shit. Shit, shit, shit.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=c6c68996108c4c6d>

Will, Mike and El sat crammed on the Byer's small worn couch. Will sat in the middle, Mike sitting on his right and Eleven on his left.

El grew bored quickly. She didn't seem to think that the movie was very interesting, even though she was so thrilled to finally watch it, and she didn't understand half of what was going on. She left in the middle of the movie, leaving Mike and Will behind.

Will on the other hand, was fully observed in the movie, regardless of the fact that he had watched it dozens of times before. Just barely acknowledging when El got up, leaving the room.

Mike couldn't concentrate on the movie at all though, his stomach twisting and turning. Guilt gnawed at him making him feel sick.

He didn't *mean* to ignore Will or treat him like shit, something he promised to himself that he wouldn't do after their big fight in the summer.

He just always seemed to push him away because he hated the way Will made him feel. Because it was the *easiest* thing he could do. It was easier to push away his problems, ignore them as if they never existed, than to actually *face* them.

The movie continued on, nearing the end. Will could feel his eyelids growing heavier, sleep sinking in, despite the fact that it was only eight o'clock at night. He was most likely drowsy from the lack of

sleep he had gotten last night. Eventually, he gave in, drifting into a peaceful slumber.

---

Mike froze when he felt an unexpected weight on his shoulder.

*Oh shit, holy fuck, oh fucking shit. Shit, shit, shit.*

Mike could feel heat rushing to his cheeks, burning madly.

*Will was sleeping on his shoulder.*

*Oh fuuuuck.*

Mike didn't dare to move, in fear of waking up the other boy.

The credits rolled on screen for a few minutes, before turning pitch black. Mike was left in the darkness, without the screen's light illuminating, tracing his face. He was hyper-aware of everything. The rain's continuous patter against the windows' glass, and the occasional shudder of thunder that shook the house. Dishes rattling against the cupboards.

*And Will. Especially Will.*

He could feel his warm, muffled breath against his neck, the steady rising and falling of his chest.

Mike had goosebumps along his arms, regardless of the fact he wasn't cold at all. Heat radiated through him, and he knew his face was probably beet-red.

Will moved slightly in his sleep, nuzzling his face deeper into Mike's shoulder. Nudging even closer than before.

*Oh fucking shit.*

Will looked so adorable as he slept. He looked so at peace and calm. Contrary to the nights where he had night terrors, making his heart beat fast and breathing loud with mumbles of pleas of help in his sleep. But, now he was perfectly fine. Better than fine.

*Stop watching him sleep you creepy fuck*, Mike internally scolded himself. Best friends definitely *did not* watch each other like that. With pure adoration in their eyes, and *especially* not watching them sleep like some psycho.

Mike jumped slightly, when thunder roared and a strike of lightning illuminated the room for a split second. He was surprised that Will hadn't woken up, though. After the events of the Mind Flayer and the Upside Down, he was on full alert of every little noise or occurrence. Even if it was just a creak in the floor, or the sound of a door opening or a light flickering for just a second. Mike knew about it all. He could see the way Will tensed up, putting his guard, an invisible shield up in case *it* was back.

Mike finally tore his eyes away from the sleeping boy when he heard the loud click of the dog's nails against the floor.

*Oh hell no.*

It's tongue was out, flopping as it panted loudly. He stared at the two boys.

Mike knew what it was gonna do. He was going to jump on them, just as Will's old dog, Chester had found glee in doing when they were younger. Peppering them in slobbery dog kisses.

And it did exactly that. Will woke up with a small 'oof' when it jumped on his and Mike's lap, wagging it's tail at a dangerous speed.

The boy's had finally managed to shove the dog off the couch, but it still bounded around the room.

Mike barely glanced at Will when he said, " Oh. Um, you fell asleep." he muttered in embarrassment.

*Yeah, I'm pretty sure he knows that dumbass*, he thinks to himself.

"Yeah, uh, sorry." Will apologized, scratching the back of his neck awkwardly.

Mike stood up and quickly left the room, in a rush.

Will bit his lip as the dog lept on the couch beside him, and he absentmindedly petted him.

---

The next day was similar to the last. Mike ignoring Will, Will burrowing out in his room.

Usually his room was somewhat of an escape for him. He was able to draw and temporarily forget about the Upside Down just for a short while. But today for some reason the memories buzzed at him, making him think and remember about things he wanted to forget.

He pulled on his sneakers and called out to Eleven, “ I’m going on a walk!”

El peaked out of her room to say, “ We were just about to, too! Do you want to come with us?”

“ No thanks, it’s fine. “ Will declined, quickly shutting the door behind him.

He had to go. He had to get away.

The sun was out, however it was still drizzling, making the scenery seem almost fairytale-ish.

Will didn’t concentrate on that though.

He had to go away as far as possible. He didn’t know what he was feeling, why he was so anxious to go, but he *had* to.

He felt his breath getting caught in his throat, making it more and more difficult to breathe. He felt tears blurring his eyesight.

*Why was he crying? He was perfectly fine a couple minutes ago.*

“Get a hold of yourself.” He scolded himself, hating that he felt this way over nothing.

He continued walking. Walking through fields and through town. He didn't care where he was going, taking random turns down streets and alleys.

He skidded to a stop and his blood ran cold when he heard familiar voices.

*Oh no.*

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

SDJFKS I RLLY NEED TO STOP PROJECTING MY  
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES ON CHARACTERS LMAO

## 9. Little dark age-Mgmt

### Summary for the Chapter:

His stomach had twisted and turned and it felt like he was going to throw up. Imagine if he knew what his own son was.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=c724000dc9d843f7>

Mike and El walked through town, their shoes crunching on stray pieces of gravel.

“ So, what’s school like?” Mike asked her, neither her or Will had mentioned anything about it. As if they were avoiding talking about it.

“ I hate it.” El said simply.

“ Do you get a lot of homework?” Mike sure did, at least triple of what he used to have in middle school. Most nights were spent slaving over it, instead of hanging out with the Party like he used to. Sometimes he was so exhausted he didn’t even bother, his mom and teachers getting mad at him for the uncompleted homework assignments.

“ Yes, but that’s not the reason why I hate it, “ She said, her voice growing slightly agitated at the mere thought of it. “ People treat me and Will like garbage.”

“ Oh. ” Mike said, realization setting in, “ What do they do?” he asked although he had a pretty good idea.

“ They say that I’m weird and stupid and other mean stuff.” El turned to him and asked, “ Do you think I’m weird?”

“ No, of course not! People are assholes.”

El sighed in relief and Mike couldn't help but feel sympathetic. Before, when she lived in the lab, she had never really experienced or exposed to how heartless kids could be, but now she had been beginning to realize that just because Brenner and the Demogorgan and all their other supernatural encounters were gone, didn't mean that the world was suddenly filled with sunshine and rainbows.

"They treat Will worse though," El said sadly, she hated that now her powers were gone she couldn't protect her and Will like she used to. "They call him names like-like *queer*, and *fag* and *gay*. And they put notes in his locker and push him and hurt him."

Mike opened his mouth, preparing to rant but Eleven still wasn't finished.

"And last week- last week they drew and wrote mean stuff all over his locker. We tried to get it off, but it wouldn't. Why, Mike? Why do they do that to him?"

"Because people think he's 'different' than most people." Mike said, making his fingers into quotation marks.

El scrunched her brow together. *That makes absolutely no sense.*

"Oh." she just said, she didn't want to press any further. She could tell that it was upsetting Mike too. The way he walked more stiff and rigidly, his hands shoved deep into his pockets and the large scowl he sported on his face.

"Did you tell your mom about the things they do?" Mike asked after a moment of silence.

She shook her head, "No. Will told me not to. He said he didn't want Mom to worry and that she couldn't do anything about it."

Mike supposed it was true. The teachers and principle wouldn't care, they wouldn't do anything to stop the torment. If anything they would be happy.

Mike had seen it happen before with his own father. They had been driving past an alleyway, one day, and they could hear someone shouting slurs, even through the closed car windows. His father

hadn't mentioned anything about it, but Mike had seen the slight smirk on his father's face. His stomach had twisted and turned and it felt like he was going to throw up. *Imagine if he knew what his own son was.* It took all in his will not to cry right then and there.

"That's so fucking stupid." Mike seethed, "Will's not even gay, and they bully him. It would be one thing if he actually was, like me, but they just assume that just because he likes drawing and he's an actual sweet person who cares about other p-"

"Like you?" El cut in.

He didn't register what he had said at first, puzzled by what El had said. But when realization hit all the color drained from his face, leaving him even paler than before and his stomach churned.

*Fuck. No, no, no. Fuck.*

*Oh god, he just accidentally outed himself. Again.*

When Mike was angry he usually didn't think before he spoke, and now that bad habit had come to bite him in the ass.

*Oh god, oh fuck.*

"Oh, did I say that?! Haha, I must've been confused, that's not what I meant to say." Mike spluttered quickly and very unconvincingly.

"Mike, friends don't lie."

*Of course, friends don't fucking lie.*

El put a hand on Mike's, urging him to speak.

"Mike, it's *fine*. I don't *care*. "

Mike let out a quivery breath. He was relieved to know that she didn't hate him. He knew that that was dumb to think, El was so sweet and she had been ostracized almost her whole life. Of course she wouldn't care if he liked boys. She hadn't even known that people thought that it was bad in the first place. But, the thought of anyone knowing, it was now almost instinct to worry. Now, two



people knew, all because Mike was being careless, letting his guard down. How long would it be until someone else found out, too? Until the *wrong* person found out?

“ Thanks. Just-you can’t tell *anyone*, not even Will.” He mumbled. *Especially not Will.*

El nodded, “ That’s why you broke up with me.”

“Yeah... sorry.” Mike confirmed.

El sighed, slightly relieved, “ Okay. I was afraid I was a bad girlfriend.”

“Of course not.” Mike said, slightly distracted by the streetlight closest to them flickering. It wasn’t dark out, *why would they be on now?*

They continued walking, the flickering lights seeming to follow them. Mike was about to open his mouth to mention something to El, but someone came tearing down the street in the distance.

Mike squinted his eyes, recognizing the striped shirt and brown hair, and exclaimed, “ Hey! Is that-”

“Will!” El whispered, nodding.

They looked at each other bewildered and jogged near him.

His cheeks were pink from running. *How far did he run?* And his hair and clothes were a wrinkled mess.

“ Will! What’s wr-”

“ We have to go! Now!”

## 10. Greek god-Conan gray

### Summary for the Chapter:

Can't anything go back to normal?

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=8a312f9d993b4602>

Will turned the corner of an alley and instantly froze. There were three boys from his school, he figured they were all a grade above him. He had never seen them in the ninth grade hallway, which meant that they always went out of their way *just* to torment him.

*Which was just peachy.*

He had never really learned their names- not like he wanted to. But he was pretty sure one of them-mostly likely the ring leader, was named Brian or Brayden or something similar.

So far they hadn't seen him. They seemed to be more concentrated about graffiting the walls with bright red spray paint than anything else.

He exhaled softly in relief and backed away as quickly as possible.

*Crack!*

A stick crunched underneath Will's shoe, and somehow the boys had managed to hear it over their loud chatter and rattling of spray paint cans.

*Are you kidding me?*

The tallest teen, looked up, and smiled menacingly, " Well, well, well. If it isn't the queer? What'cha doing here? Try'na get in our pants or something?" His friends behind him laughed, despite the fact that it wasn't funny at all, and approached him quickly.

*Run away.*

Suddenly, he was twelve years old again, in Hawkins Middle School's field. The Mind Flayer slowly taking over him, the cold taking over. He knew that he should run, that he *had* to run, but his feet were planted firmly to the ground, refusing to move.

*Run away.*

The bullies came closer, clearly prepared to put up a fight. They did *not* want a *fag* in their town.

Finally, Will's feet, which were rooted in the ground, decided to listen. He spun around, running away as fast as he could, glad to have at least a little head start. Those other boys were taller, had longer legs, it wouldn't be very long, or very hard for them to catch up.

He ran through the streets, but it felt all too familiar. Cold prickled at him, making his heart race even faster. He could see dark slimy vines catching up to him, seeping through the ground, darkening everything in its path. It caught up to him though, and he was *there* again.

*No, no, no.*

Tears clung at his lashes and he swiped them away with the back of his hand. His lungs ached and burned, desperate for a break. But he couldn't stop, he *couldn't* or else *it* would get him. His head felt pounded and felt heavy, *staticy* almost.

It was finally a rock that he tripped over, making him snap back into reality. He *wasn't* in the Upside Down, he *wasn't* going to get taken over by the Mind Flayer. It was just him and his stupid imagination, always making him see, *feel*, things that weren't there.

He quickly remembered that now was not the time to dilly dally. He turned around seeing the silhouettes of the teens in the distance.

He stood up, the cut on his knee stung, and he hissed in pain.

He knew though, that if the other boys caught up to him it would

hurt more than just a cut on his knee.

He started running again, praying that the distance between them would last. He could see two people up ahead.

*El and Mike.*

He wasn't sure whether to feel relieved or displeased.

They jogged closer to him and El asked in bewilderment, "Will, what wr-" She began.

"We have to go! *Now*!"

"What happened to your knee?!"

"Just-nothing!" Will grunted in frustration, "We have to go, okay!"

"Why?!" Mike piped up, Will turned around and gestured to the boys in the distance quickly approaching.

Mike's eyes widened, "Oh shit." He didn't know who they were, but he could tell if they stayed any longer they'd be in trouble.

El instantly caught on and they started to sprint down the street.

"Who're they?" Mike asked, gasping for air in between words.

"Nobody!" Will panted. *God, he did not want to talk about this.*

"They're from our school." El supplied, "They always bully Will."

Will shot her a look of disdain. *Seriously?*

After what seemed hours of running, even though it was only minutes, they reached their house. Will quickly jabbing in the keys and unlocking the front door. The scurried inside, slamming the door shut behind them.

"Do you think they know where you live?" Mike asked, his hand on his knees, trying to catch his breath.

Eleven and Will both shook their heads, *thank god they didn't.*

El looked as if she was about to ask Will something, but he walked away swiftly, avoiding conversation.

He went into the washroom, sitting on the bathtub, inspecting the cut on his knee.

“ Whoa, dude are you okay?” Mike exclaimed asking from the bathroom door frame.

“ I’m fine.” Will muttered, “ Just dandy.” he deadpanned.

Mike walked hesitantly inside and asked, “ Where do you keep the peroxide?”

“ In the cabinet.” Will mumbled and nodded towards it.

Mike quickly found it, and sat down next to Will. He put his hand on his knee, Will’s cheeks turning slightly pink at the touch.

“ Here, this might sting a little.” He warned him, before pouring a small amount on the wound.

Will’s knee jerked away for a split second, biting on his lip.

*It stung like heck.*

Mike proceeded to clean it and put on a band-aid, and smiled softly when he finished. It reminded them of when they were younger always getting hurt and fixing each other up. They always got scratches from hiking in the forest, and they always managed to use an excessive amount of band-aids. Especially, that one time Mike thought it was a good idea to climb a tree unsupervised.

“Thanks.” Will said, giving him a small smile back in return.

Mike’s cheeks flushed light pink and he quickly fled the room.

*What’s his problem?*

Everytime he thought their friendship was back to normal- before Mike started to act like a big jerk, Mike ran away ignoring him all over again.

Will bit his lip, and glared slightly at the spot where Mike had stood a few moments ago.

He walked out of the bathroom and into his room. He pulled a fresh shirt out of his dresser drawer, he felt gross and sweaty after all that running.

He took off the shirt, trying to avert his eyes from the scar on his waist where he had got jabbed with the fire iron during the Mind Flayer exorcism.

*Can't anything go back to normal?*

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

pov: idk how to treat a cut, cause im an idiot and it definety shows

## 11. City boy-Calpurnia

### Summary for the Chapter:

Will is absolutely dreading his birthday. Growing up means change. And so far change had not worked in his favour, at all. He knows that he's being stupid, it's not like he can avoid his birthday. But, that doesn't make him dread it any less.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=1d339bde553c40dd>

Joyce was not thrilled to hear about the kids picking on Will.

El had told her, she meant well though. She didn't like keeping secrets. *Friends don't lie*. Will had specifically told her *not* to tell mom, that it wouldn't help anyways. But she decided to try, from what Eleven could tell, her mom could almost always find a solution for everything, right?

Now Will and Joyce were in the kitchen arguing.

"Why didn't you tell me people were bugging you, sooner?" Joyce asked, sighing.

"It's not a big deal." Will mumbled, looking at his feet. *Oh god, he wanted to disappear.*

"You know what? Maybe I should just go over to the school and talk to the principal." Joyce murmured to herself more than Will, growing flustered.

"No!" Will blurted out. This was exactly what he dreaded. "It won't change anything!"

"Honey..." Joyce begins.

“ Can’t we just forget about this?! It doesn’t matter!” He repeated.

“ Yes, it does ma-”

“No it doesn’t!” Will cuts in, growing more frustrated by the second, “ I’ve been through worse things than this.”

“ I know you have, sweetie. But, that doesn’t mean people should treat you like that.” She smiled sadly.

*There it was.* The sympathetic smile that Will was all too familiar with. It made him feel like an even bigger freak. *God*, he hated it so much-even his mom had treated him differently. Maybe it was because he *was* different. He wasn’t as cheerful and happy as he was *before*. All his teachers at school had called him extremely introverted and a quiet kid, but now he was more withdrawn than anything.

“Can I just go to bed now?” Will sighs. He’s done talking about this even though she’s most likely going to pester him about it tomorrow. Right now though, his head hurts and he’s tired.

The light above them blinks for a second and Joyce makes a mental note to change the light bulb the next chance she gets.

“Of course. Goodnight, Will.” She says, the sympathy still on her face. Dark spots ring her eyes from the lack of sleep from worrying about work and nightmares and her children.

And now Will feels bad. He knows that she’s going to worry about him and he doesn’t want to be a burden to him. His stomach churns, and he mumbles a goodnight back to her.

---

Will sleeps in much longer than usual, glad to have a decent rest. He thinks that the reason he’s been sleeping better recently is because of Mike. It’s reassuring to know that he’s there despite that he’s been a big jerk.

He throws on a random outfit and walks around the empty sleeping bag on the floor. Will’s feet pad against the floor as he looks around the house. It’s empty except for him. Even the dog’s gone. His mom would be at work, so where is El and Mike?



He gets his answer when a post-it note is tacked to the Cheerios box. He recognizes El's sloppy writing and says that she's giving Mike a tour of the town. Not like theirs much to see. It's somehow more boring than Hawkins, it doesn't even have an arcade.

Jealousy whispers in his mind. *God, why is he jealous? He doesn't care that El's hanging out with Mike.*

The phone rung through the house, surprising Will, making him jump slightly.

"Hello?" He answers slightly irritated. He hasn't gotten to eat breakfast yet, and the hunger's making him crabby, too.

"Hey, buddy!"

Will's face breaks into a grin upon hearing his brother's voice.

"Hi! How's college?"

"Good, same stuff as usual. So what's going on at home? I hear that Mike came to visit, that must be fun!"

Will rolls his eyes and says "Yup, loads of fun.", hoping that Jonathan won't hear the sarcasm soaking his words.

He doesn't.

"Nice. Are you excited for your birthday?"

*Nope.*

Will is absolutely dreading his birthday. Growing up means change. And so far change had not worked in his favour, at all. He knows that he's being stupid, it's not like he can *avoid* his birthday. But, that doesn't make him dread it any less.

"Yup." Will replied, lying through his teeth.

"Great! Sorry, I can't make it, y'know, boring college stuff."

"Yeah, it's fine."

They talked a little while longer, Jonathan the one making up most of the conversation.

Will exhaled when he hung up the phone, putting the phone back on the cradle. He grabbed the milk from the fridge adding some to a bowl and pouring in some Cheerios and began to eat at last.

Now that he's the only one in the house, the silence is slightly unsettling. He's used to the dog barking, despite the short amount of time it's been here, the blare of the radio that's usually on, and the low hum of the music from El's room. Will had made sure to educate her on good music.

He had never really minded the quiet *before*. But, sometimes it was *too quiet*, and it reminded him of the eerie stillness from the Upside Down. It was beginning to feel like *everything* reminded him of the Upside Down.

The sound of a car pulling into the driveway, cut into his thoughts. *Why is Mom home this early?*, he thought.

She was never home early. Her boss was a big prick, not even letting her drive home to eat lunch even though work was just a couple minutes away.

It couldn't be anyone else either, neither him or Eleven had any friends here. And El definitely did not drive. Will smiled slightly at the thought.

Loud knocking at the door rung through the house.

Will got up, opening the door, and nothing could have prepared him for the surprise at the door.

Will swore his heart stopped beating for a split second. *No, no, no. It couldn't be him.*

Lonnie.

## 12. When you die-Mgmt

### Summary for the Chapter:

He barely acknowledged that the power was out, streams of lights flowing through the curtains, highlighting the dust floating in the air.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=dcafee9c996d4f1e>

He's standing on the porch, smoke wisping into the house from a cheap cigarette, that Lonnie holds in between two fingers. Will can't help but cringe, despite the fact that his mom smokes too. But Will likes finding more reasons to hate his dad.

"Aren't you going to let me in?" He asks.

*No.*

Will blinks, and tries not to think about the bad feeling he's got in the pit of his stomach, "Y-yeah. Okay."

*No, no, no.*

"So this is where you live now, huh?"

"Yeah." Will says, too afraid to say anything more.

They're standing in the living room and Will has no idea what to do. It's not like his dad would listen to him if Will told him to leave.

"Well?" Lonnie barks expectantly, making Will flinch, "Aren't you going to show me around?"

Will nods and leads him to the direction of the kitchen. And shows him the rest of the house,

“Why are you even here?” He finally musters the courage to ask, trying not to let his father hear the aggravation in his voice.

“ Can’t a father wish his son a happy birthday?”

“ My birthday’s tomorrow.” Will muttered.

“Well, better early than never!” He answers, clapping a hand on Will’s shoulder. Will tries not to shrink away, shrugging the hand off him. *That’s not even how the saying goes.*

Will leads him down the hall to his room.

*Of all the years he had to come visit for his birthday, of course it was this year.*

“ Uh. This is my room.” Will says pushing the door open and stands awkwardly inside.

His father inspects carefully the drawings plastered onto his walls and yanks one off the wall, slightly ripping the drawing.

“ What the fuck is this?” He exclaims angrily.

“Um, a drawing?” Will says, sarcasm creeping in. Will knows that talking back is just going to get him in even deeper shit, but he honestly doesn’t care anymore. It’s exactly what he expected to happen after Lonnie set foot in his house. Lonnie making insults about how crappy the kitchen looked or how outdated the furniture was the whole time Will had shown him the house. In fact, Will would have been surprised if his father *didn’t* call him a queer or get mad for doing something *girly* like drawing.

Lonnie shook his head, disgusted, “ Hoped that you would have grown out of it, but no, you’re still a fucking faggot.” His voice quickly grew louder, poison coating his words.

Will didn’t even care. He had accepted the fact that he would always be a disappointment to his father. They were like chalk and cheese, Will knew that they were never going to get along.

“ After all these years, I’d thought that maybe, just *maybe* you’d man

up!”

“ That’s pretty funny coming from you. Considering the fact you can’t be ‘man enough’ to be an actually good father.” Will shot back. *God*, he was so done with this.

His father always came back every couple of years to pretend he was a good dad, just to end up spitting slurs at Will.

Lonnie pinned Will against the wall, shaking the walls, making books and junk rattle on shelves. Will winced slightly from the impact.

“ The fuck did you just say to me?!” Lonnie growled, furious.

Will glared at him, “ I said,”

The lamp in his room flickered once.

“ That it’s funny that,”

It flickered again, hissing and popping.

“ You can’t be,”

And again.

Will opened his mouth to speak again, but Lonnie cut him off with a swift punch to his cheek.

The lamp’s light bulb burst with a pop, glass shattering and sent flying on the ground.

Neither of them noticed, though.

Will could only see stars for a moment, pain exploding in the spot where he got hit. He knew that there was going to be a nasty bruise there later. His cheek hurt like *hell* , but it wasn’t just that. His head felt blurry and fuzzy and he couldn’t think straight. It was that *feeling* that was happening much more frequently, but this time it felt like it drained the energy out of him.

*It’s just because of the punch*, he told himself through his swimming

thoughts.

“ You will *never* talk to your father like that again!” Lonnie snarled, “ Thinking you’re so brave when you’re just a fucking pussy.”

Even though Will’s cheek hurt and his head was throbbing, Will deadpanned, “ A father?! Is that what you’re *really* calling yourself?! Because personally, that wouldn’t be my choice of words. I’d say you’re a piece of shit, who has nothing better to do than to be a big asshole to your ex-wife and sons, because you’re just *that* insecure about yourself!” He exclaimed angrily.

He was so done with people walking all over him, treating him like garbage.

Lonnie pushed Will harder against the wall, preparing to put up a fight. *No one talked to him like that.*

Will put his hands on Lonnie’ chest, struggling to push him away.

Energy shook through Will’s hands and veins and jolting into Lonnie’s chest, fizzling and popping. Lonnie immediately recoiled, cursing and gasping for breath in agony.

“What the fuck!?! Fucking shit!” He cursed, holding his chest in pain, taking strangled breaths.

“ G-go away.” Will uttered to him, still in shock himself. *What had just happened?*

“ Go away.” He repeated again, this time more firm.

Lonnie quickly scrambled to his feet and winced in pain, practically flying out the door.

Will let a shuddery breath and slunk against the wall, he was so *exhausted* . His head pounded, a jumbled mess of thoughts.

He barely acknowledged that the power was out, streams of lights flowing through the curtains, highlighting the dust floating in the air.

Will looked at his hands in shock. This time, unlike all the episodes

he got from the Upside Down, this was *real*. Whatever had happened- whatever Will had done, *he* had felt it. And Lonnie did too.

Will leaned his head against the wall, *this wasn't good*.

**Notes for the Chapter:**

BASKHF IDC IF WILL IS OUT OF CHARACTER IN  
THIS CHAPTER, I JUST DESPERATELY WANT THIS  
TO HAPPEN IN S4 LMAO  
also fuck u lonnie

## 13. Hot rod-Dayglow

### Summary for the Chapter:

“ Say it’s not my fault you don’t like girls again?!  
Because maybe it didn’t occur to you that it is your  
fault!”

### Notes for the Chapter:

[https://open.spotify.com/  
playlist/00H317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?  
si=a9bd80321b8c4b02](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/00H317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=a9bd80321b8c4b02)

Will woke up startled, when he heard the front door bang open. He had fallen asleep on the floor, despite the fact that he had woken up just hours prior. It felt like all the energy was swept out of him, but at least now he didn’t feel as exhausted. He stood up stretching, his body aching and numb from the hard floor.

He got up groggily, and inspected the bruise Lonnie had left in the mirror. There was a mix of reds and purples clashing together and it was beginning to swell up, just below his eye.

Will sighed immediately regretting that, as even the slightest movement seemed to hurt. His mom would *definitely* see this, the bruise stuck out like a sore thumb, impossible to miss. *Oh god*, she was going to freak out.

Luckily it wasn’t his mom who had arrived home. It was Mike and El, which wasn’t *that* much better. He could hear their laughter echo through the hallway from his room.

It was cut short when Mike asked, “ Hey, did the power go out or something? The lights won’t come on.” He commented flicking the switch an excessive amount of times.

Will immediately froze. *This wasn’t good*. He ran his fingers through his hair, frustrated. *W hat did he do? Something’s wrong, very wrong*.

Will heard footsteps coming down the hallway and El peaked her



head in asking, “ Do you know what happened to the li-”

Her mouth gaped open, letting out a small gasp when she noticed the bruise on his face, “ What happened?!” she exclaimed.

Mike walked into Will’s room upon hearing El’s cry, and his eyes widened as he blurted out, “ Whoa! Holy shit, what happened to you?!”

*Oh god.*

Will averted his eyes to a random drawing tacked onto his wall, “Lonnie.” He mumbled under his breath, barely audible.

“What he’d say?” Mike asked, glancing at El.

“L-lonnie?” She repeated slowly, looking at Will for confirmation and he nodded.

El’s face twisted in confusion, her eyebrows knitted together. *Who’s that?*

“ My dad.” Will supplied, as if he had read her mind. Him and El were good at figuring each other out, knowing when one of them was upset or confused.

“ What!? What did he want?!” Mike exclaimed, the over-protectiveness that only really came out around Will beginning to show, “Why did he hurt you?”

Will shrugged, “ I don’t know. He’s an asshole.”

Both El’s and Mike’s eyes widened upon hearing that, Will *never* swore. They stood in silence for a moment, no one quite sure what to say.

“ I can get you some ice.” El said helpfully. And with that, she left the room leaving Mike and Will behind. Mike sat on the edge of Will’s bed and Will sat down next him. Mike edged away, despite the fact they were already a foot apart.

“Why do you keep acting like this?” Will asked, finally

“ Like what?”

“ Like I’m contagious or something.”

“ No I don’t! What are you talk-” Mike scoffed before Will cut him off.

“ Yes you do, Mike! You’ve acted like this the whole time you visited. We can’t ever be in the same room together without you making it weird!”

“ That’s not true!” Mike shot back, his eyebrows furrowed together in annoyance, despite the fact that he knew Will was right.

“ Then why are you acting so weird!?” Will asked, his voice rising and he threw his arms up in exasperation.

“I’m not! Just-you- ugh!” Mike struggled to say.

*To say what?*

“So this is my fault now?!” Will asks, rolling his eyes, “ What did I do, Mike?”

Out of the corner of Mike’s eye, for a split second, he sees the light of the lamp flicker on momentarily despite the power being out just a few moments ago. *It’s probably just his imagination.*

Mike inhales saying, “ I-just-everything!” he exclaims fumbling on his words, not paying attention to what he’s saying. Either that or he doesn’t care.

Will’s mouth drops open in utter shock.

*Are you fucking kidding me?*

The color drains out of Mike’s face, upon realizing what he said and sighed, “ Fuck-Will, that’s not what I meant to s-”

“ Really, Mike? Because that always seems to happen to you a lot.” Will deadpans.

“Will just listen-”

“ What? What are you gonna do?” Will spat, “ Say it’s not my fault you don’t like girls again?! Because maybe it didn’t occur to you that it is your fault!” he blurted out before storming out of the room and almost crashing into El who was in the hallway.

““Scuse me.” He mumbled.

He had too much energy, his brain growing cloudy and disconnected, his breath quickening. He didn’t want a repeat of what happened to Lonnie. Now he has *that* to worry about too. Whatever *that* was. He did know that if his mom found out she’d totally freak, being more overprotective than before. And that was the last thing *anyone* needed. *Get ahold of yourself*, he scolded, feeling himself beginning to spiral out of control.

Oh god, Mike was going to hate him. Will didn’t mean to say half of what he *did* say. He wasn’t supposed to tell him that last part. *God, he was so stupid. Why did he say that?!*

Why did he have to fall for *Mike*, of all people?

*His straight best friend who was kind of a jerk.*

Will was just *praying* that Mike would be his usual oblivious self and didn’t understand.

---

Mike’s lips were pursed together, his brow furrowed in confusion and bewilderment.

*Maybe it didn’t occur to you that it is your fault!*

What was *that* supposed to mean?

His train of thought was cut off when El stormed inside, clearly upset. *She had heard their whole argument.*

**Notes for the Chapter:**

hdksfk i love how will is aware of how stupid his  
crush is

## 14. Cigarette daydreams-Cage the elephant

### Summary for the Chapter:

Oh God, what part of him thought giving Will those letters was a good idea? He had probably just ruined Will's birthday even more.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=b1d791fddb49c0>

“Why do you treat him like garbage?!” El demanded.

“I-just- you won’t understand!” Mike exclaimed frustrated. Frustrated with himself. Frustrated for ruining everything with Will all over again, just like the summer.

El stares at him for a moment in disbelief. *Is he for real?*

“ You like him don’t you.” She states finally.

*Fuck. No, no, no.*

Mike can feel his heart drop, heat rising into his cheeks.

“Y-yeah. Of course. He’s my friend.” Mike stutters and laughs nervously.

Mike almost expects her to say ‘*friends don’t lie*’ or all that bullshit, because it’s so blatantly obvious he’s lying. But instead she says, “No. Not *just* friends. You like him *more* than *just* friends ”

Mike laughs again, not able to look her in her eyes as he says unconvincingly, “I have no idea what you’re talking about.”

“Mike. You love him don’t you?” She says softly.

“ This is so stupid.” Mike scoffs, beginning to walk out of the room,

but Eleven grabs his wrist just in time.

“ Mike.” She says again, her brown eyes staring at him, “Friends don’t lie.”

*There it was.*

“Fine!” Mike exclaimed, exasperated, “ I do like him, okay? I love him! Is that what you wanted to hear? And no one was supposed to know, because I’m not supposed to feel this way, okay?! And now you know, and Nancy knows...” He voices breaks, and tears that he was trying to desperately hold back escape.

“Fuck.” He mumbles, brushing his eyes with the back of his hands.

El rubbed her hand in circles on his back trying to comfort him. Usually it was the other way around, *him* comforting *her*.

“ Mike, it’s okay.” She whispers.

“ No it’s not, El! It’s not supposed to be like this! I’m not supposed to like boys!” He retorted, hot tears flowing faster and faster down his face as all of his self hatred arose.

“Says who? Only stupid mouthbreathers say that-that shit!” El exclaimed angrily.

She didn’t understand. How could people be so mad at people loving people? How could Mike be so upset about liking *Will* .

Mike laughed sadly, but it felt more forced than not. *She wouldn’t understand. She wasn’t like him.*

---

Will sat on the stairs leading up to their house. He could hear El and Mike talking loudly, though he took no effort to listen in. He was more focused on calming down, but he had barely any success.

He was growing more and more agitated, especially when he noticed that one of the street lights was flickering on and off. Especially, when he knew that *he* was the one who was causing it.

“ *Stop .* ” He hissed to himself.

The light just seemed to blink on and off more.

*Why couldn't he just be normal for once? He had to go to the Upside Down, get possessed and now this?*

*El* was supposed to be getting her powers back. Will had seen her on multiple occasions trying to crush a can or pick up something with her mind. *Will* wasn't supposed to get powers, or whatever the fuck *this* was. *El* was the one who knew how to control them, not *Will*.

The buzzing in his head grew stronger and the cloudy blurry feeling washed over him again.

“ *Stop it.* ”

All the lights on the street grew very bright for a moment, before bursting into millions of shards, the sound of glass shattering piercing through the street.

A random pedestrian, an elderly woman who was walking her dog gasped and quickly rushed down the street.

All the color drained out of Will's face, in horror.

*God, what did he do?*

---

When Joyce found out about Lonnie's surprise visit, *boy was she livid.*

“ You will, never, *never* visit our home until the day I die!” She yelled angrily into the phone, before slamming the phone so hard into the cradle, Will was surprised that it didn't break.

And now she was *even* more over-protective, always asking a flurry of questions, which aggravated Will even more. Which made him more stressed about his newly-found powers.

Will's birthday went by in a flash. Joyce took the day off work despite Will's protests, saying that she didn't have to waste one of the

few sick days she had, on him.

She, of course, didn't listen to any of that, and Will had to suffer through the most awkward singing of the Birthday Song in history. El didn't know the lyrics because apparently no one had taught them to her, so she kind of sang along softly to whatever sounded right. And Mike was never keen to the Birthday Song in the first place, he remembered that him and Will had ranted about how stupid it was for half an hour straight, a couple of years ago. Joyce had sang along over-enthusiastically, trying to fill in the awkward silence.

She could sense that there was some tension between the two boys, she figured that they had gotten into a fight or something, but she decided against asking Will, he was already upset with her.

Will just stared at his plate the whole time, too embarrassed to say anything. He never knew what you were supposed to do when you're getting sung to, and besides, he was too concentrated on *not* making the lights flicker.

---

When it was the day Mike had to go back home he awkwardly went in Will's room to say 'bye'.

For the last few days they had been avoiding each other, and whenever they *did* interact it was uncomfortable like they *hadn't* known each other for ten years.

Mike had his suitcase in one hand and a stack of papers in the other.

"Um, bye." Will said half heartedly. *God, this was so awkward.*

"Bye." Mike said, before taking a deep breath and giving Will the stacked, crumpled papers.

Will looked up at him, puzzled.

"Uh, happy birthday." Mike replied, his voice shaking slightly. His heart seemed to race even faster, his heart pounding in his ears. "Just, don't read it until I'm gone, okay?"



“Uh, okay.” Will said, still confused.

And with that Mike left, and took the city bus home, immediately regretting what he had just done.

*Oh God, what part of him thought giving Will those letters was a good idea? He had probably just ruined Will's birthday even more.*

He leaned his head against the bus' window, and sighed.

He had massively fucked up.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

DSJFHK I KNOW I WROTE THIS BUT EVERY TIME I  
READ THIS CHAPTER I GET SO EXCITED

## 15. Rue-Girl in red

### Summary for the Chapter:

I'm sorry for ruining our friendship, and for hurting your feelings over and over again, and for the things I said last summer, too.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=6bb8ef1f860c49dc>

Will sat on his bed, biting his lip in confusion.

When Mike had given him the papers he seemed weirder than normal. *Scared* almost.

Will hugs his legs to his chest flipping through the papers. Some of them seem older than others, and the dates marking each paper can confirm.

One of them dates back to the day Will moved houses, another one from Christmas and one from the day before visiting Will.

Will scans the letters lazily. He doesn't understand the big deal. Why was Mike so afraid of giving them to him? Why didn't he just mail him these letters like all the others?

But now Will reads them more carefully, and something seems *off*. Will can't pinpoint it exactly, but some are more different than the others.

Especially the one that has the most recent date.

*March twenty-first.* The day before Will's birthday. The day they fought.

This time Will reads the whole letter, not missing *anything*.

---

March 21st, 1986

Will,

I fucked up again.

I mean, I guess you know that because we just fought. Again.

And it was all my fault. Again.

I guess it's not that surprising.

I just I keep on messing everything up with us. You probably think I don't care about you or something and I don't blame you, because all I've done is treat you like shit. and I But you're the best thing that's ever happened to me and I don't want to mess everything up, more than I have.

Fuck.

You make m

Sometimes, I think back to that day. When they pulled your 'body' from the water. I remember it so well because *what if you did die?* And it makes me feel terrible, because I make *you* feel terrible even though you could've died. And I know you think I'm such a big jerk for ignoring you and stuff, because I *am*. It's just I just hate the way I feel around you, and I hate that I can't tell you that, because then you'll hate *me*. It's not like I'm ever going to give you this.

I try to make things go back to normal, like before the Upside Down and stuff. Before I felt the way I did about you. But it's so hard to be normal and pretend. And you make it so hard to.

I mean, what I guess I'm trying to say is that, it's hard to pretend that I think of you as just a friend. that I don't think about

And the easiest thing to do is to kinda ignore you and pretend that

you don't exist and that my feelings aren't real, which is so fucking stupid, because you're my best friend. But I just hate it. I'm probably making absolutely no sense right now, but I guess it doesn't matter. It's not like I'm ever gonna show you these letters.

Nancy said I should, but that would just fuck things up even more. And the worst thing that could happen is losing you again, and I don't want to mess up our friendship just because I have a *stupid* crush on you.

Sometimes I try to trick myself to pretend I *don't* like you. It's sounds really dumb now that I see that on paper, but it's the truth, I guess. And it even worked for a bit. I don't know how but it did, I guess I just assumed that I liked El because I was *supposed* to like her. But then I realized that I didn't and then I tried to make myself right by spending all my time with her and that just messed me up even more because half the time I spent kissing her I imagined kissing *you* it didn't work and it just ruined our friendship even more. And if my dad ever found out he'd hate me, and you probably would too, so I just kept on trying to prove to myself and everyone that *I did* like Eleven. And still, sometimes I try to trick myself into thinking I'm straight and I like El and I'm everything I'm supposed to be even though I know it's not going to work at all.

Fuck, I'm rambling so much right now. I just I just like you, okay? More than friends. And I know you won't like me back and I'm not even sure if I *want* you to. Damn it. I don't even know anymore, it's like a constant tug of war in my mind. Half of the time I spend hoping that you'll like me back, but the other half of the time, I know that you won't and I should feel glad, because *I shouldn't be hoping that you like me*.

Just, I'm sorry for everything. I'm sorry for ruining our friendship, and for hurting your feelings over and over again, and for the things I said last summer, too. If I'm being completely honest, when I was yelling at you last summer I meant those things to *me* . I don't want to grow up. I just want everything to be like *before* when everything was simpler and when I didn't like *you* . And when I *thought* I liked girls.

I'm just so fucking sorry, that I can't tell you any of this to your face

because I'm a fucking coward and that you're never gonna know because it would be so *stupid* to give you this letter.

Sincerely

Love, Mike

---

Will exhaled, letting out a shuddery breath, realizing that he hadn't breathed half the time he was reading the letter.

*Holy fucking shit.*

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

mike is such a lovesick mess omg

## 16. Soap-Melanie martinez

### Summary for the Chapter:

“ You guess?” Max repeated, incredulously. “ You’ve been there-for what five days?- and that’s all you have to say?”

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=d0450df505214f3d>

The bus let out a hiss as it veered to a stop.

Mike got off the bus, feeling like he was about to throw up. *Why did he give Will those letters? He ruined everything.*

He could feel the lump in his throat growing bigger, hot tears prickling at his water line, no matter how much he tried not to cry. He blinked hard trying to make the tears go away.

He couldn’t wait to get home. He just wanted to be alone with his thoughts. He felt exhausted even though he hadn’t done anything to use up energy.

When Mike got to his house he went through the door to his basement. He knew that if he went through the front door, then his mom would ask him about the trip and he the last thing he wanted to do was to talk to anyone.

Max was the last person he expected to see there.

“ What the fuck are you doing in my basement?”

Max who was sprawled on the couch, gasped clutching her heart, “ Holy shit you scared me!” she exclaimed.

Mike gave her a pointed look and said, “ And you’re in my basement because...?”

“ Jeez, relax. Believe me, I didn’t come here by choice.” She rolled her eyes and added, “ Dustin and Lucas wanted to be here when you arrived. They have nerd shit they want to talk about or something.”

As if on cue, Dustin and Lucas stomped down the steps. Dustin’s arms were full of pudding cups, but he quickly plopped them down on the nearby table to greet Mike.

“ Hey man, we missed you.” Lucas said, patting Mike’s back.

“Yeah, it’s nice having you back.” Dustin added, giving him one of his infamous smiles.

Mike smiled weakly, he was glad to see his friends but he just *really* wanted to be alone.

“ Yeah I missed you guys, too.”

“I didn’t!” Max piped up from the couch, “It was quite enjoyable having the week Mike free.”

Mike gave her a sarcastic smile, “ I could say the same about you, too.” He deadpans.

“ Just ignore her. She’s just in a pissy mood because I *finally* beat her at Dig Dug!” Dustin said proudly, tearing open the lid of a pudding cup.

Max quickly sat up straight, huffing, “ You did not! You cheated!”

“ I didn’t cheat! How do you cheat at Dig Dug?!” Dustin retorted before turning to Lucas, “ Lucas, did I cheat?!”

Lucas nodded his head gravely, “Sorry man, but you did.”

“ What! You’re just taking her side because she’s your girlfriend.”

“Well, duh, I’m supposed to *Dustin*, that’s my *job*. ” Lucas answered, earning a punch in the arm from Max.

“ Ow! What was that for?!” Lucas complained, rubbing at his arm.

“ It’s my job.” Max said, smiling smugly at him and Mike couldn’t help but laugh.

“ So how was it at the Byers?” Dustin asked through a mouthful of pudding.

“ It was great.” Mike said, sarcasm accidentally seeping into his voice.

“Oh shit. What happened?” Lucas asked.

“ El probably broke up with him again, and now he’s probably being a sulky baby.” Max cut in before Mike could answer.

Usually Mike wouldn’t give a shit about what Max said, although this hurt for a different reason. It reminded him that *he should* be upset about breaking up with El. He *should* be sulking or doing whatever the fuck boyfriends did after a breaking up with their girlfriends.

But, he almost felt *relieved*.

He had hated faking, and hated leading El on.

“ She didn’t break up with me, *Max*. I broke up with *her*. ” He said crossing his arms.

“Wait, really?!” Lucas exclaimed in surprise.

“ I know talking about Mike’s love life is fun and all, but I have much better news.” Dustin declared, cutting in before Mike could answer “ I fixed Cerebro!” he exclaimed so quickly Mike could barely understand.

“You fucked what?!”

“ What?! I didn’t fuck anything!” Dustin said, facepalming as Max snorted and Lucas was dying of laughter.

“ I said I fixed Cerebro, you idiot!”

“ Hey! You’re the one who spoke a million miles per hour! How was I supposed to know what you were saying?!” Mike said, put his hands



up in defense.

“Fine.” Dustin huffed, “ But now we can talk to whomever we want, whenever we want. *Including Will and El*”

“ Cool.” Mike states simply, clearly not showing the same enthusiasm as the curly-haired boy.

“ Wow, don’t be so excited.” Max deadpanned, “ Dustin’s been waiting here all morning just to tell you that, y’know.”

“ Yeah, and he raided all your pudding while he was waiting.” Lucas smirked, shifting his gaze to the stack of pudding cups on the table.

“ Gee, thanks.”

“ Always happy to lend a hand!” Dustin said, giving Mike a thumbs-up.

“ How was Will and El?” Max asked, changing the topic.

“Uh, g-good, I guess.” Mike stuttered.

“ You guess?” Max repeated, incredulously. “ You’ve been there-for what five days?- and that’s all you have to say?”

“ Geez, sorry. What am I supposed to say?”

*Definitely not that you ruined your best friend’s birthday because you gave him fucking love letters.*

“ I don’t know!? Something!”

“ Calm down you guys. We’ve barely been here for ten minutes and you’ve been fighting constantly.” Dustin cut in.

Max and Mike just scowled at each other as Lucas snorted., “ What did you expect from them otherwise?” And earned another punch from Max. “ Ow! Stopping hitting me!”

“ Then shut the fuck up.”

“ Seriously, what’s up at the Byers'? You haven’t told us anything.”

Dustin commented.

Mike just shrugged.

“ You’re hiding something, aren’t you?” Max said staring at him, “ You’re never quiet.”

“ Yeah, man. Like *never*. What gives?” Lucas chimed in.

Mike threw his arms up in exasperation, “ Nothing happened. We just talked and hung out and stuff. I don’t know why you’re making this such a big deal!”

“ You all need to calm down. Let’s just sit and eat chocolate pudding peacefully *without* argument.” Dustin suggested.

“ *No!*”

“ Not everyone has a pudding fetish like you Dustin.” Max began.

“ Pudding fe-what!? That doesn’t even make sense!” Dustin exclaimed.

“And besides, everyone’s fine. Mike’s just being Mike.” Max said.

Mike just scowled at her and said, “ Whatever. I need to unpack my suitcase.” Before storming upstairs.

“We’re gonna meet up at Nelson’s farm to talk on Cerebro, after school!” Dustin called after him.

““Kay!”

“ What a drama queen.” Max muttered.

“ Mike?! Never!” Lucas gasped sarcastically.

## 17. Can I call you tonight-Dayglow

### Summary for the Chapter:

“ Will. Will, come in, it’s Mike. Over.”

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=ebc57e7239a64487>

The last few days haven’t been anything different. Mike went to school, hung out with the party as much as he could considering he spent most of his time after school slaving over homework. Accompanying Dustin when he talked to Suzie on Cerebro which Dustin should be *very* thankful for. Listening to them call each other ‘Suzie-Poo’ and ‘Dusty-Buns’ for half an hour straight was sickening.

And most of all, avoiding the obvious.

*He should probably just call Will on Cerebro and tell him to forget about the whole thing , right?*

He’s been stressing about it non-stop.

He was so fucking stupid. *Why did he think giving him those letters was a good idea?*

Mike didn’t think he could top the fight from last summer, but here he was. He somehow fucked everything up even more, by doing something *even stupider*.

And that’s why he’s hiking up the hill after school to get to Cerebro. Luckily, Dustin and Lucas and Max were busy, doing something although Mike wasn’t sure what they were doing. He was grateful, they could *never* find about any of this.

He’s just going to tell Will to forget about everything and maybe, *just maybe*, they can go back to normal, right?

Mike takes a deep shuddery breath before pressing the button and saying, “ Will. Will, come in, it’s Mike. Over.”

---

Will’s sprawled on his bed reading comic books.

El’s in her room painting her nails. She tried to convince Will to let her paint his but he declined. He doesn’t want to give the assholes at school another reason to make fun of him and anyways, he hates the smell of that stuff. He can smell the chemicals from his room and he wrinkles his nose.

He looks up from his comic in alarm when he hears a muffled voice coming from underneath his bed.

*His walkie-talkie.*

Who would be calling him? Wasn’t Cerebro broken too?

He folds the corner of the page, to not lose his place and slides off his bed. He rummages underneath his bed where a bunch of old art supplies are stored before finally finding the walkie-talkie.

He blows off all the dust and pulls up the antenna .

---

“ Um, it’s Will, over.” his voice crackles through the static.

Fuck.

Part of Mike was hoping that Will wouldn’t pick up.

“ Uh, um. H-hi.” Mike splutters his face turning red before adding, “ Over.”

“Hi.”

Mike digs his fingernails into the the palm of his hands before rambling, “ Um, listen, can we just forget about y’know the letters,

because it's really stupid and I know you don't like me back and I don't wanna ruin our friendship just because I-

"Mike!" Will exclaims, cutting him off.

"Uh, yeah?"

"I like you, too, you idiot."

Mike blinks in confusion, "What?!"

"I said that I like you, too." Will repeats, this time more softly.

"Wait. Really?" Mike says, dumbfounded.

"Yes, you dummy. I can't believe you didn't know!" Will says laughing, "It was so obvious it was pathetic!"

"Oh." Mike says, flopping onto the grassy field in relief, Will's laughter still echoing through the speaker.

"Oh." Mike repeats again, laughing along as well, "Well how was I supposed to know!?"

He can almost imagine Will facepalming as he says, "How could you not know!?"

"Then why didn't you tell me?!" Mike adds, "That would have saved me tons of stressing y'know."

"You were literally dating my sister! I thought you liked girls!"

"Oh. I guess that makes sense."

Will just snorts in response. *Why does he like Micheal Wheeler of all people?*

Mike laughs again, letting out a sigh of relief, a big smile plastered onto his face.

The boys continued to talk for a little while longer before Mike got interrupted by Dustin.

“ We were going to the video store, remember?!” Dustin huffs, out of breath from going up the hill.

“ Oh shit. Sorry. I forgot.” Mike said.

“Of course you did.” Dustin mutters, stomping back down the hill as Mike says goodbye to Will.

Mike ran to catch up to him exclaiming, “ Sorry dude! I forgot!”

“ So you’ve said.” Dustin says but adds, “ It’s fine. Max is just gonna be pissy.”

“When isn’t she?!” Mike laughs and Dustin just elbows him.

“ Who were you talking to anyways?” Dustin asks.

“Will.” Mike says, unable to hold back a smile.

He feels on top of the world.

*Holy shit, Will likes him back!*

He knows he shouldn't feel *this* happy about a boy liking him back, but he can worry about that later. *Because holy fucking shit Will fucking Byers likes him back!*

Never in a million years he would’ve thought that this would happen.

Dustin glances at Mike who seems to be in his own little world, with a humongous grin on his face, and Dustin arches a knowing eyebrow.

They finally reach the store, where Max is practicing tricks on her skateboard in the nearly empty parking lot as Lucas watches her.

“ Well I’ll be darned! Look who finally decided to show up!” She shouts when she sees the two boys in the distance.

“ You know you could’ve gone in before us! Or do you need a babysitter to look after you?” Mike shoots back, “ I heard that Steve’s a pretty good babysitter!”

Max just huffs and picks up her skateboard, while Dustin gives a yelp,

“ Hey!”

They go inside and loiter around the sci-fi and horror section.

Dustin finds all good movies and insists on borrowing all five of them at once.

“ When do you even have time to watch that many movies?” Lucas asks him.

“ I’ll make time, *Lucas*. ” He scoffs, “ Besides, you’re gonna want to watch half of them anyways.”

Dustin puts them on the counter, and Robin sighs, sitting on the counter, “ How many times am I gonna have to tell you and your dingus friends that three’s the limit?”

“ Robin.” Dustin says seriously, looking her dead in the eye.

“ Yes, dingus?”

“ As you know highschool is a very stressful environment.”

“ Mhm. I’m aware. And your point is?”

“ And after a long week of being in that stressful environment, watching an excessive amount of movies helps me relax and cope with the terrible things I see there.” Dustin pats the stack of movies, “ Do you *really* want me to be stressed?”

Robin rolls her eyes and glances at the stack of VHS tapes, “ And watching *The Shining* and *Day of The Dead* is going to help you cope?”

“ Yes.”

Robin sighs, “ Fine. Only because Steve’s gonna give me shit if I don’t give his most beloved child what he wants.”

Dustin cracks a smile and cheers, “ Yes! Thanks, Robin! You’re the best!”

“ I know.”



## 18. Chapter 18

### Summary for the Chapter:

Yeah, crazy together.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=e1ad4a8c85f3489c>

Will wakes up gasping for breath, tears that he didn't know were there streaking his cheeks.

He panics, his mind still a little disoriented and disconnected from himself, his thoughts swimming in and out. His mind is foggy and he can feel the coldness of the Upside Down prickling at his skin, despite the fact that he's been in his room the whole time.

in terror. But at last Will makes out the outline of his dresser and desk through the darkness, making him feel at least *some* comfort in the familiar surroundings .

He's not in the Upside Down, with thick vines spreading throughout, with the looming cold that never goes away and the thick air dusted with white stuff that looks like a mix of snow and ash. He's not getting chased by the Demogorgan, with it's flower-like mouth that's not pretty like a flower at all, ringed with tiny razor-sharp teeth.

He's in his room and he's safe.

But the paranoia still eats at him, making him tug up his blankets for warmth over his still-shaking body.

---

Mike wakes up to his lamp flickering on and off like crazy, and he groans from the brightness. *It can't be morning already.*

He rolls over lazily, squinting his eyes, trying to adjust to the light.

The lamp keeps on flickering and a thought enters his mind.

*It can't be him can it?*

He slides hesitantly to the edge of the bed, closer to the lamp. He should just go to sleep, it's nothing, *right?* He thinks that it's almost positively nothing, but Mike can't ignore the gnawing feeling that telling him it's not.

Before he can change his mind Mike whispers, " W-Will, is that you?"

The flickering stops and Mike sighs. He's so fucking stupid. Of course it's not Will- *how could it be Will?*

It's probably just electrical problems or something. He can ask his mom about it in the morning.

He should just go back to bed or else he's gonna be a big grouch in the morning.

He's about to pull up the blankets and get settled into bed, when the light blinks once.

*One blink for yes, two blinks for no.*

Mike's eyes widen in surprise, *it can't be a coincidence, right?*

" Um, are you okay?" He asks slowly, talking quietly so his parents wouldn't wake up. If his mom caught him talking to the light's, she'd think he's crazy and take him to the mental hospital.

The light blinks twice.

" What!?" Mike yelps, but quickly hushes his voice glancing at his door, " Are you hurt?"

The light blinks twice once, more and Mike relaxes slightly.

" Maybe you can talk in Morse code, if you wanna talk about it." Mike suggested softly.

He knows that both him and Will know Morse code. They learnt it

just so they can tap it out on their desks at school to talk undetected, a couple years ago.

It takes out a moment before Will blinks out, “ Okay... I had a nightmare.”

“ Oh shit. It’s just a nightmare, right? Not like before, when you could see into the Upside Down?”

“Yeah, I forget some parts of it so I’m pretty sure it’s just a nightmare” He spells out, finally.

“ That’s good, right? At least we know that the gate’s closed.” Mike says, trying to look for the positives.

“ Yeah” But after a moment the lamp blinks, “It just seems so real in the moment and it hurts so much because I just want everything to be like before.”

“It’ll get better soon, though. Just like the doctors said, it’ll just take time.”

“I know, it just feels like I’m going crazy” “ Well, remember what we said? *Crazy together, right?* ” Mike whispers softly, having a small smile on his face just from the memory of it.

Will blinks back, but Mike doesn’t even have to decode it, to know what it says.

His mind playing back the memory of what they promised each other two years ago.

“Mike!” Nancy exclaimed, flinging Mike’s door open.

*Shit.*

“ Uh, yeah?”

*How the fuck is he supposed to explain this?*

Nancy gives him a pointed look and asks, “ Who are you talking to? I was *trying* to sleep.”

“ Uhhh....myself?” Mike says and cringes. *God, he’s so bad at lying.*

“ My lamp broke and it was flickering and stuff, and I got frustrated and talked to myself... in anger?” He continued, making shit up and clearly failing to make up a somewhat convincing lie.

Nancy gives him another look, this one saying ‘ *What the fuck is wrong with you?*’, and stomps over and says, “You could’ve just unplugged the lamp y’know.”

She pulls out the plug and Mike comments, “ Now I can’t see shit.”

She sighs, exasperated, and turns to look at him through the darkness, “ It’s *night!* What the fuck is there to see?!”

“ Uh... I don’t know...?”

“Okay. You’re acting way weirder than normal.” Nancy says, “ What’s wrong?”

“ What?! Nothing, nothing’s wrong!”

And this time he’s not lying. Shit, he’s actually really happy. Well before Nancy barged in, completely ruining the moment.

“ Did something happen?” But before Mike could get in a word, she added excitedly, “ Wait! Did something happen with you and Will? You’ve been oddly happy this week, and you’re usually a big asshole.”

Nancy finding out about Mike’s crush on Will seems like forever ago.

He hasn’t told her anything since. It’s just weird talking about these things, especially with his older sister. He’s mostly used to keeping everything to himself.

“ Gee, thanks.” Mikes says and adds vaguely,” I mean.... Yeah.”he says as he tries to suppress a smile even though Nancy probably can’t see him through the darkness.

“ I did what you said- I gave him the letters.” Mike admits sheepishly, playing with the hem of the blanket. “ And he told me he liked me

back.”

Nancy gasped in excitement, “ He did?! That’s amazing, Mike!” She exclaimed, hugging him, Mike trying to fight the urge of shrugging her off.

“ Why didn’t you tell me before?!”

“ Was I *supposed* to?”

“ Yes!! I’m your big sister. It’s my job to be nosy.”

“ Geez, okay, okay, calm down.”

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

nancy is such a mood tbh sdhfhks  
also don't ask me how will can hear mike through  
the lights, i dont think that far ahead (or think at all)

## 19. Run the world-Dayglow

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=e1ad4a8c85f3489c>

Dustin, Lucas, Max and Mike were all sprawled out on Dustin's living room floor. They had just finished binging all the movies that Dustin had got, which took them half the day. Lucas claimed that it was a waste of a Saturday, but he didn't protest once the movies started.

Now their necks and eyes were sore, which was to be expected.

"Holy shit, I think I'm gonna need glasses now." Max exclaimed, "We really shouldn't have watched that many movies."

"I'm not trying to say I told you so, but I told you so." Lucas said smugly, yawning shortly after.

It was late at night and none of them wanted to admit to being tired, so now it was just a race to see who would fall asleep first.

Mike appeared to be losing.

His face was mashed into his arms, face down, as he was burrowed in his sleeping bag.

Dustin however, was not tired or sleepy at all. He stole Lucas's pillow from him, and chucked it at Mike's head.

Mike lets out a muffled "Cut it out, I'm trying to sleep."

Max snorts and shines the flashlight's beam at him, "Aw, does little Mikey need his beauty sleep?"

"Yes. Yes he does."

"Well, wake up, 'cause I have a great idea." Dustin says, grabbing another pillow and throwing it at him.

“Okay, okay.” Mike huffs, “ It’s literally one in the morning, how aren't you tired?”

“ A magician never tells his secrets.”

“ I’m pretty sure eating twenty pounds of 3 Musketeers doesn’t count as magic, Dustin.” Lucas interjects.

Dustin ignores him and says, “Anyways, we all know that it’s almost Easter, and we all have school off for a couple of days.”

“ Your point is?”

“ My point is, if El and Will have school off too, they can come down here to visit.” He says, grinning.

“Ooh, yes!” Max agrees enthusiastically, and Mike nods happily.

“ Yeah! We can call them on Cerebro tomorrow after returning the movies.” Lucas suggests.

Dustin nods, and says, “ Yeah, and they can stay at my house, my mom wouldn’t care. She likes having visitors!”

“Nice!” Lucas says, trying to stifle a yawn, “ Can we talk about this in the morning, though?”

“Yeah, I don’t think my eyelids can stay up for another minute.” Max adds.

“You guys are such party poopers.” Dustin huffs, “ But fine.”

Everyone crawls into their sleeping bags, and turns off their flashlights, saying their good nights to each other.

Although Mike was half asleep just minutes ago, now he’s finding it hard to. He’s too excited to talk to Will and El tomorrow, because *holy shit if they could come for Easter that would be amazing!*

After lots of tossing and turning, sleep finally comes, and Mike sleeps soundly despite Dustin’s snoring beside him.

---

“Ahoy!” Steve greets a customer coming in and Robin nudges him, “Wrong job, dingus.”

The girl who came in gives Steve a funny look before proceeding to browse at the movies.

Steve walks over to her to see what she’s looking at, “ Ya like comedy, huh? Well I consider myself a pretty funny guy.” he says and winks at her. Robin watches him from the counter and cringes, his pick up lines seems to be getting worse by the day.

The girl turns to look at him and says, “I’m getting this for my *mom*. And anyways, you’re not my type.”

Steve’s smile falters, but brightens once he says, “ Well I know a *very* nice person, who works here too, who you could be interested in.” He says motioning to where Robin was standing.

Her face immediately turns red and she flips Steve off.

Luckily the other teen didn’t turn to look and she just gives Steve another pointed look and goes over to look at another section.

“ Are you kidding me, Steve!” Robin exclaims, “ That’s like the third customer you’ve scared away! You’re gonna get us fired!”

“ What!?” Steve said, putting his hands in the air in defence, “ I thought that you would appreciate my efforts of getting you a girlfriend!”

Robin just snorts and Steve exclaims, “ What?! I was being helpful.”

“ Sure, if that’s what you wanna call it.”

---

“ You think Steve and Robin are dating?” Lucas asks the group, after returning Dustin’s movies at Family Video.

“What?!” Mike exclaims.



"I asked if you think that-"

"Yeah, I heard what you said. But of course they're not dating!"

"Really? I thought for sure that they were."

"Nuh-uh, they're definitely not." Mike says shaking his head.

"Yeah, didn't they hate each other until, like the Mind Flayer took over or something?" Max adds.

"That was six months ago. Maybe they got together?" Dustin suggests.

"Yeah." Lucas agrees, "Nearly every girl who hangs out with Steve Harrington ends up being his girlfriend."

"Yeah so? And anyways, I'd hope Robin had better taste than Steve." Max says and Mike laughs.

They continue hiking up the hill leading to Cerebro and Lucas complains, "Why did you *have* to put it all the way up *here*. If I have to hike up this hill one more time I'm gonna lose my shit!"

"Yeah, well the signal won't reach from our house and then it would be useless, so quit complaining."

They finally reach the top and their cheeks are red and Max's hair is a mess from the wind.

"Thank fucking God." She huffs, out of breath, flopping onto the grass, next to Dustin who is sitting with his legs crossed.

"Will, Eleven, do you copy?" He asks into the radio's mic.

Nothing.

Lucas flicks a piece of grass at Mike and he rolls his eyes.

"El, Will, do you copy, over?" Dustin repeats.

"Maybe they're eating lunch?" Max suggests, and Dustin shrugs saying again, "El, Will, do you-"

“Yup! Uh, yes, I copy, over.” Will’s voice echoes out and everyone stops fooling around, and sits up straighter.

Dustin grins, “ Yes! The rest of the Party is here and listening, by the way, so don’t say anything shitty about them.” He adds.

Will laughs, “ I don’t gossip like you, Dustin!”

Dustin gasps, “ I don’t gossip what are you talking about?!”

Mike nudges Dustin, “ Come on, man. Just ask him already.”

“Okay, geez, don’t be so impatient!”

“Huh?” Will asks.

“ Sorry, I was talking to Mike. He was being a sulky, impatient baby.”

He can hear Will laugh again and Mike tries to hold back a smile.

“ Just ask him,” he says instead.

Dustin huffs, “ Okay, okay! Will, since Mike is about to throw a temper tantrum-”

“I am *not* !”

“-We were wondering if you guys wanna come over at Easter? Since we both have a long weekend. And El can stay in the guest room, and you can sleep in my room!”

“ Ooh, that’s a good idea!” Will chirps, “ I know that El’s been dying to see you guys too. I’ll go ask my mom, give me a second. ”

“ There. Are you happy now, Mike? If you’re gonna be a grump all d-”

“ You’re the one who woke me up at six this morning!” Mike exclaims, “ Don’t expect me to get like-five hours of sleep and *not* be grumpy!”

“ Yeah, man. I’m exhausted!” Lucas agrees.

Before Dustin can say anything back, Will's voice chimes through the speaker.

“ We can come.” He says and Lucas, Mike and Max let out a whoop. “ Are you sure that it's okay? Your mom won't mind?”

“ Of course not! She loves you guys!”

“Okay. If you say so.”

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

im too obsesed with the idea of steve helping robin  
get a girlfriend :)")

## 20. Glued-Melanie Martinez

### Summary for the Chapter:

Will's gravestone from the events of '83 is still there. He can see it from where they are. It's almost mocking him, just waiting for the day he actually dies. Then he'll be buried deep underground, like the vines from the Upside Down.

El is beside Will on the city bus' hard, uncomfortable chairs. She's telling him excitedly about the last time she was on a city bus- when she visited Kali. Will's heard this story before but he doesn't mind, he likes it when his sister tells him stories. He thinks that if El ever learned how to play Dnd she'd be a pretty good Dungeon Master.

Both him and El are thrilled to visit all their friends, but Will tries to stay relatively calm. He's figured out that his powers act up whenever he's really excited, afraid, pissed off, or surprised. So basically any emotion besides being calm which is just so inconvenient, because half the time Will is stressed or nervous about *something*.

There've been a couple close calls where his mom gets suspicious of the amount of flickering lights, but she either thinks that it's just that the house and it's wiring is old, or in rare occasions, it reminds her of the Demogorgan, which isn't very good either.

So far El or his Mom haven't linked the lights to Will. Either that or they *have* and just haven't mentioned anything. Either way, Will's grateful.

The bus rolls to their stop and they get off the bus.

Will feels uneasiness creeping in, just being at the place where all the unfortunate events had occurred. Ghosts of the past still haunted them at their new house, but *here*, here the air felt heavy with dread. Like a dark storm cloud that loomed over the town.

Now he knows why his mom was worried about them going. The last thing Will needed was to freak out the second they got off the bus.

Although he still gets nightmares and episodes at their new home, being here reminds him that it was all *real*.

“Will?” El pokes his arm.

He lets out a shuddery breath and asks, “ Yeah?”

“ Aren’t we gonna go?” She asks motioning in front of them.

“ Oh, um, yeah. Come on.”

After a moment of walking in silence El asks, “ Is Dustin’s mama nice?”

“ Yeah, she’s really nice.”

“ Oh okay, good.” El smiles in relief, “What about his dad?”

“ Oh. His dad died when he was really little.” Will answered, glancing at Eleven.

Her face crumpled slightly, immediately sympathetic for Dustin. She was very familiar with losing a loved one.

“ It’s okay, though. I mean it’s not okay, but Dustin has no memories of him, and he’s fine now right?”

It took a moment before El responded, hesitantly, “Right.”

They finally reach Dustin’s house and they can hear him shriek excitedly from inside, “ They’re here you guys!” followed by a loud array of footsteps.

The door is flung open and before Will or El can react, they’re smuggled with hugs. El’s eyes are wide in surprise, before she laughs happily, and Will smiles at her.

“ You guys came!” Dustin exclaims, releasing them from a big bear hug.

“They said they were gonna, shithead.” Lucas says.

Dustin ignores him and says, “ Come on in you guys!”

Max immediately grabs El by the hand and they go inside giggling.

Mike shoots Will a small unsure, shy smile and says, “ Uh, hey Will.”

Will gives him an even bigger smile in return and says, “Hi.” making Mike’s face brighten and his cheeks flush pink.

They all sat in the living room, where their sleepover was held a week prior. Mike, Will, and Lucas are all crowded on the couch. Mike’s and Will’s just touching.

El and Max are sitting at their feet, giggling and talking excitedly.

Dustin’s sitting on the chair next to Will, asking an abundance of questions, that Will doesn’t have time to answer.

“ Geez, Dustin calm down!” Mike interjects.

Lucas adds, “ Yeah, man. Did you eat the rest of your 3 Musketeers stash? You’re so hyper I wouldn’t doubt it.”

“I-What?! No! You guys are just mean.”

Will laughs and says, “ It’s fine, Dustin.”

Dustin turns to Lucas and Mike, “ See? Will’s nice. You should learn from him.”

Both Mike and Lucas roll their eyes as Dustin asks, “ So what’s it like there? Does it snow a ton?! Like in Canada?!”

“ He didn’t move to Alaska!” Max pipes up from talking to El.

Both Will and Dustin ignore him and Will answers, “ It’s pretty much the same it was here.”

Everyone talks for a little while longer before they decide to go outside because Dustin wants to give Eleven and Will a ‘tour’ of the town.

“ Nothing’s literally changed. It’s the same shit they saw before they left.” Lucas says pointedly and Mike agrees, “ Yeah. They haven’t

even lived there for a year.

“ You guys are such party poopers.” Dustin scoffs.

But even so they all head outside, Dustin saying things like, “ This is Hawkins Middle School, home of the Tigers.” Even though Will and El know exactly what it is.

Finally they walk past the cemetery, immediately regretting their decision. No one talks, not even Dustin, leaving them in a hushed uncomfortable and awkward silence.

Will’s gravestone from the events of ‘83 is still there. He can see it from where they are. It’s almost mocking him, just waiting for the day he *actually* dies. Then he’ll be buried deep underground, like the vines from the Upside Down.

There’s a big lump in his throat, and he’s finding it harder to breathe. Mike whispers to him, “ You okay?” his brown-chocolatey eyes grow wider in concern.

“ Yeah, I’m fine.” Will lies, trying to make himself believe it. He should have listened to his mom’s big list of warnings and concerns, she rambled on and on about before he came here. *Of course*, it would trigger him even more. He’s beginning to understand why his mom decided to move.

He glances at the one streetlight that’s beginning to blink and tries to concentrate on calming down. Mike studies his face a little while longer, knowing full well that he’s lying but replies slowly, “ Okay.”

Will tries to even out his unsteady breaths, still glancing nervously at the light *praying* that it wouldn’t flicker again. Mike hasn’t still hasn’t mentioned anything about his newly-found powers, but then again they haven’t had a chance to speak alone. It’s not like Mike’s just going to blurt out, “ *Hey Will! Nice conversation we had through the lamp last week! Nancy heard me though, and she pulled out the plug, though. Sorry about that!*” in front of everyone.

Will quickly adverts his gaze when he sees Mike eyes trailing to see what he’s looking at, and he casts another worried look his way.

“ Are you *sure* you’re okay?” Mike asks again.

“ Yup.”



## 21. Body and Mind-Girl in red

### Summary for the Chapter:

"Don't deny it! I have eyes you know!"

Dustin takes Yertle carefully out from the terrarium, and says, cheerfully " Hey buddy. You have some visitors!"

He puts him on the bed next to Will and El. Everyone else has gone home long ago, when the sun was about to set. Now it's almost eleven o'clock, the only source of brightness is Dustin's room light.

El looks at the turtle with interest, at its deep grooves in its shell and its old chiseled skin. It's funny how she's barely fazed by interdimensional creatures, but a little turtle is what fascinates her.

" Won't he get turtle germs on your bed? Can't turtles give you salmonella or something?" Will pipes up.

Dustin gasps and puts his hands on Yertle's 'ears'. "Hey! Don't be mean to Yurtle!"

El giggles and says, " Yeah!"

" Do turtles even have ear-"

"Will!"

" Okay, okay! Sorry, Dustin, sorry Yertle."

" Good. You should be."

Dustin's mom knocks on his door, poking her head in. " Hey Dusty. I'm going to go to bed now, try to keep it down, okay? Don't stay up too late."

"Yup! Thanks, mom."

" Good night, Will. Good night, Ella."

El wrinkles her nose and corrects her, “ El.”

Claudia smiles apologetically, slightly confused at the unusual name and says, closing the door “ Good night, El.”

“ Welp, I guess we should go to bed now, too.” Dustin says, slapping his hands on his knees, standing up. “ You know where the guest room is right?” he asks Eleven.

She nods and Dustin opens the door and says with an absolutely terrible British accent, “ Good night, m’lady.” and both El and Will bust out in laughter.

“ What?! Don’t you like my accent?!”

“ No!”

“Okay, okay.”

El leaves, and Dustin rummages through his closet, stuffed with different inventions and what-not, when he finds what he’s looking for.

“ Aha!” He exclaims, tossing the sleeping bag at Will.

“You almost hit Yertle.” Will comments as he watches Dustin struggle to close the closet door.

He finally shuts it with a grunt and exclaims, “ No, I didn’t! See he’s fine.” He picks up the turtle and puts him gently back into his terrarium, “ Aren’t you, bud?”

The boys then put on their pyjamas and brush their teeth and get into bed. (Or into the sleeping bag in Will’s case.)

They talk for a while, Dustin contributing most to the conversation, talking about cool inventions he’s made, and about school. They finally decide to go to sleep, but then Dustin starts giggling for absolutely no reason at all.

“ Why are you laughing?” Will whispered to him.

“ I don’t know!”

“ *Oh my god. Shhhh!*” Will shushes him, “ Your mom is gonna be mad if she hears that we’re still up!”

Dustin lets out a snort, “ No she wouldn’t! She’d probably take a picture and add it to the ‘sleepover’ page in her scrapbook.” He laughs.

“What?!”

“ Yeah, I know, right? So weird. She’s been obsessed with scrapbooking ever since she got a new camera! I swear she was taking pictures of a squirrel the other day, for like, a good solid fifteen minutes before Mr. Whiskers tried pouncing on it.” Dustin retells, grinning.

“ Mr. Whiskers?” Will repeats, incredulously.

“It’s our new cat.” Dustin says proudly, adding, “ According to Mike it’s a stupid name, because all cats have whiskers.”

Will snickered, “ Well if it helps, I think it’s a good name.”

“ Why thank you.”

The boys lie in silence, listening to Dustin’s clock tick as time passes.

“Hey Dustin?” Will whispers hesitantly, cutting through the silence.

“ Yeah?”

“Can I tell you something?”

“ Yeah, of course.”

“ Um. I’m gay.”

He’s not sure why he chose *now* to come out. It’s probably because he doesn’t want it to be some huge secret, he feels bad about not telling his friends even though he doesn’t owe them anything.

“ Oh okay.” Dustin says simply.

“ Okay?”

“ Yeah, dude. It’s cool, I’m not like Troy or some asshole.”

Will exhales in relief and says gratefully, “ Thanks.”

“ You don’t have to thank me. It’s common sense that people should be accepting right?”

“ Oh. Yeah.” Will smiles happily. It’s not like he expected Dustin say ‘Fuck you. You’re going to hell’ or something as equally stupid, but the way he’s acting like *it’s normal* makes Will feel at peace.

“ Have you told anyone else?”

“ Only Mike.”

“Coolio”

Will laughs and Dustin says mischievously, “ Sooooo. Do ya like anyone?”

Will just *knows* that Dustin is wiggling his eyebrows, even though it’s too dark to see. “ Nope.” Will lies, even though a part of him coming out was for him to be more truthful.

“ Oh come on! You’re no fun!” Dustin says, adding unexpectedly, “ Although, I guess there was no point in asking when I know you like Mike, anyways.”

Will choked, coughing, before he could splutter out, “What?!”

"Don't deny it! I have eyes you know!"

“I-What?!”

“ You should tell him.”

Will smiles. *He has no idea.*

“ I might.”

Will still is processing what had happened a couple weeks ago.

Mike likes *him*.

*Mike*. The person he's been pining over forever, the person he thought was straight, and never in a million years would like him back. But he does!!

And holy fucking shit. Will had never expected *this*. He was prepared to take his secret to the grave, promising himself that he would never tell Mike, never ruin their friendship.

Will had always thought that being friends with Mike was a miracle itself, but being *more than friends* was the second miracle in his lifetime.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

i feel like dustins and wills friendship is so underated  
tbh

## 22. Me and Michael-Mgmt

### Summary for the Chapter:

“Mm. Well tell your friend I say happy Easter.” She says, smirking slightly.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=471b3698646342a6>

Will knew absolutely nothing about love.

He only knew stuff from the dumb, cheesy soap operas that El made him watch with her, everyone once in a while. But all that was fake, with stupid plot lines.

And apparently Mike didn't know much either.

“Uh hi.”

“Hi.” They're both sitting in Mike's basement. It looks the same as it has been years before, the same drawing's Will made for Mike taped onto the walls. The permanent feeling of coziness with it's dim lights that Will always associated with playing Dungeons and Dragons.

*Oh God, why was this so awkward?*

Will burst out laughing at the sheer ridiculousness of it all, “Why are you acting so weird?!”

“Me?!” Mike exclaimed, “You're the one who's acting weird!”

Will snorts, “You're the one who's only capable of saying hi, and staring at me. And also, I haven't heard you this quiet, like ever.”

“First of all, rude. And second of all, I can't think of anything to say 'cause nothing has literally happened *and third of all*, maybe I like staring at you, 'cause you're nice to look at.”

Will lets out an airy laugh, “ That’s not creepy at all.”

“Wow. I can’t believe you! Here I was being nice and complimenting you, and you have the nerve to insult me!” Mike says, a smile playing at his lips.

“ Awwww. Is someone sad?” Will asks, sticking out his bottom lip, mockingly.

“Shut up.” Mike says elbowing him, “But yes.”

“ You’re an idiot.” Will says leaning his head lightly on Mike’s shoulder, making Mike’s cheeks flush pink and his heart flutter.

“ I know.”

*Holy fuck, this feels like dream.*

“Hey Will?”

“Mhm?”

“ Y’know I meant everything I said in the letter right?”

“ Yeah. I know.”

“ It’s just I still feel really bad about last summer.”

“Mike, it’s fine. Really.” Will cuts him off.

“ No it’s not. I hurt your feelings even though you were *right* , I was ruining everything.”

“ Mike, it’s okay,” Will says giving him a reassuring smile, “ We both said stupid stuff, and we’re fine now, right?”

“ Yeah, but-”

Will covers Mike’s mouth with his hand, giggling, “ Mike! It’s fine!”

*Holy fucking shit, Will giggling had to be the cutest thing Mike’s ever seen.*

“ Okay, okay!” Mike says, throwing his hands up and laughing too.

“ Do you know what the rest of the party’s doing today?” he asks Will. He hasn’t heard from Dustin or Max or Lucas all day, and usually there’s at least chatter on their walkie-talkies. Usually just Dustin trying to convince Max to watch Star Wars and her telling him that she refused to participate in ‘nerd activities’.

Will nodded, “ Yeah. I think Dustin’s with Lucas who’s babysitting Erica. And El and Max are doing whatever girls do in their free time.”

“ Oh shit. Erica must be pissed.”

Will chuckles, “ Yup.”

“ Wanna go to the video store with me? My mom wants me to pick up some dumb rom-com for her.” Mike asks.

“ Sure. Sounds like something El would watch.”

Mike grimaces, “ She *still* watches shows like that?”

“ Yup.”

“ Like, willingly?!”

“ Yuppers.”

“ Oh god.”

“ Agreed.” Will says standing up, offering Mike his hand. He takes it and they both laugh when they almost crash into each other.

They go upstairs and put on their shoes. Mike insists that they take his bike, Will on the back, which Will finally gives into, after a little convincing.

“ I swear to God, Micheal, if I fall off I will murder you!”

“ Oh come on, Byers! Live a little!” Mike says, turning around to face him, laughing.

“ Pay attention, you idiot! You’re gonna get us killed!” Will exclaims, after Mike accidentally swerves.



“ You’re never gonna get your driver’s license.” he mutters.

“ Hey! I heard that!”

“ Good.”

They finally reach their destination Will commenting, “ I will *never* do that again!”

“ I guess you’re hitch-hiking home, then.”

“ I guarantee, a random stranger would do a better job driving, than you biking.”

Mike fakes a gasp and scoffs, “ I don’t know why I even like you! You just bully me!”

And Will just shoots him a smile and opens the door to the video store in return.

---

“ Hey, dingus. Who’s that with the priss’s brother?”

“ Robin, for the last time, Nancy’s not a priss. She’s nice.” Steve turns around, “ Hm. It’s the Byers kid.”

“ Byers? Jonathan’s brother? The one who went missing?”

“ Yep. Just don’t ask him about the Upside Down and stuff to his face, he’s been through shit.” He turns around and goes back to shelving VHS tapes, adding, “They must have come to visit or something.”

Robin watches them for a moment longer, noticing how they’re both much more affectionate to each other than with their other friends, the way they let their fingers touch for a moment longer than what would be considered normal, the way they giggle with their flushed pink cheeks.

“ I’m gonna go say hi.” Robin decides and Steve asks, “ Why? I thought you hate kids?”

“ Yeah, well...” Robin begins to say her voice trailing off, and walking away before she can give an actual explanation.

“ Hey!”

The boys turn around, and Mike says, “ Hi Robin.”

“ Oh, um, hi.” Will adds, giving an awkward wave.

“ The name’s Will right?”

Will nods in affirmation, “ You’re the girl who told El this weird story when her leg was hurt.”

Mike laughs beside him, “ Oh my God! I forgot about that!”

Robin furrows her eyebrows, confused and then exclaims, “ Ohhhh, I remember that! About how in soccer Beth Wildfire’s whole-ass leg bone was st-”

“ Yeah, yeah, yeah! We really don’t wanna know the rest of the story. Hearing it once was enough!” Mike interrupts quickly, grimacing and glances at Will who looks equally disgusted.

“ Okay, okay, alright. Do ya guys need help finding anything?”

Mike nods, “ I think my mom had a movie on hold.”

“ Okey dokey.” She goes to the counter and the two boys follow her. “ Dirty Dancing? Really?” She asks incredulously, after finding it and hands it to Mike.

“It’s my mom’s.” Mike adds quickly, insulted that she would even *think* that he’d watch that movie, “ I would never choose to watch that shit in a million years.”

Mike thanks her and him and Will are about to head out when Robin calls, “ Hey, Mike?”

He motions for Will to wait outside for him and he walks back to the counter.

“ Yeah?” He asks, puzzled.

“ How long is your *friend* gonna visit?” She heavily emphasizes on friend which confuses Mike even more.”

“ Until Monday.”

“Mm. Well tell your *friend* I say happy Easter.” She says, smirking slightly.

“ Okayyy...” Mike says suspiciously, and says goodbye.

*What was that all about?*

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

IDK Y I WRITE ROMANCE FICS WHEN I HATE  
WRITING FLUFF AND SHIT

welp i tried

also dont mind me hating on the movie dirty  
dancing, my mom forced me to watch it with her,  
and i stopped watching after like 5 minutes i hated it  
sm lmaooo

## 23. Ghost adventure spirit orb-Chloe moriondo

The air is a bit cooler than it usually is in March. The cold nips at Will's ears, and his cheeks and nose are tinted pink, making the specks of green and his eyes stand out against the brown.

“ What the hell?!” Dustin exclaims, “ It's supposed to be getting warmer, not *colder* ! It's almost summer!”

Will just nods, if it were any other day he would have mentioned that summer was still a couple months away. But now all he can focus on is the *cold*. He shivers, his body remembering the familiar sensation of dread and feeling exposed when he was possessed.

It's stupid. He shouldn't be *afraid of the cold*. It's not something people are afraid of, like spiders or the dark. It's the fucking *cold* . He should be fine.

He should be over this by now, the incident at Starcourt was months ago, and him getting flayed and stuck in the Upside Down was even longer ago. *Much* longer ago. He just wants to move on from it all, but his brain and body won't let him. And now he feels like shit all because it's fucking cold out and it reminds him of the fucking Upside Down.

Fucking hooray.

They trudge through the park and Mike's already there, sitting on a swing, his feet dragging against the gravel, instead of actually swinging. He doesn't notice them yet, appearing deep in thought, his brow furrowed.

“ Hey Mike!” Dustin shouts, waving.

Mike turns their way, startled and waves.

When they finally reach him and they both take a seat on a swing on each side of him.

Dustin comments, “ You're here early. We agreed to meet at eleven thirty and it's-”

“ Eleven.” Will supplies, looking up from his watch.

“ My parents were arguing and shit, so I just came here early.” He mumbles, shrugging.

“ Oh. You wanna talk about it?” Will asks.

Mike shakes his head, “ Nah. It’s fine.” and Dustin gives him a reassuring pat on the back.

They sit in silence, swinging lazily, until the rest of the Party shows up.

Max and El arrive first, El proudly showing Will her nails that Max had painted at their sleepover. Lucas arrives last, out of breath from jogging the whole way there. “ Sorry, guys! Erica made a mess and I had to tidy it up!”

“Ha! I’m so glad I’m an only child. Just me and Mr. Whiskers.” Dustin laughs.

Mike mutters, “ It’s still gonna be a stupid name, no matter how many times you say it.”

The Party suggests things to do for the day, but it’s not that easy. You can only go to the video store and watch movies a number of times. And they’re all indecisive.

“ Hey? Are you okay?” Mike asks Will quietly. He’s barely contributed much to the conversation, and although Will’s not much of a talker, he’s never *this* quiet.

“Yeah... I’m fine. Why?”

“ I dunno. You just seem kind of out of it.”

“ I’m fine.” Will repeats again, “ It’s nothing. It’s dumb.” he says staring at the ground in embarrassment.

“ Whatever it is it’s not dumb. You can talk to me y’know.” Mike insists.

Will sighs, digging into the gravel with the toe of his shoe, “ It’s the cold. It just reminds me of-of the Mind Flayer.” When Mike doesn’t respond, Will adds, “ I told you it was stupid.”

“What? No, it’s not!”

“ Yes it is. You don’t have to lie“

“ It’s not though. Really. I mean, it’s not like you can help the things you’re afraid of right?”

“ Yeah, I guess.” Will mumbles.

“ Here.” Mike says, tugging his blue sweatshirt off and over his head, and hands it to him, “ Maybe you’ll feel better.”

“ No, it’s fine. Besides, I don’t want you to be cold either.” Will protests.

“ Really. I’ll be fine.”

Will’s face turns red and says sheepishly, “ Thanks.” and shrugs it on. It would fit perfectly on him besides the way too long sleeves that bunch up past his hands.

“ Hey! Whatcha guys doing?” Someone calls, and they both whip their heads around in surprise.

“ Steve!” Dustin exclaims, running up to him and Robin, watches with an arched eyebrow as they do their ‘secret’ handshake.

“ Did they- did they add on to their handshake?” Max asks in disbelief.

“ I can confirm! Those nerds were having a blast adding on to it. Until, Keith threatened to fire Steve if he didn’t go back to work!” Robin says.

“ Hey! Whoa, whoa whoa! I am *not* a nerd!” Steve interrupts quickly, “I *am* literally anything, *but* a nerd.”

“ You’re a nerd by association. Solely because you’re friends with a

nerd.” Lucas says, motioning Dustin’s way.

“ You’re just jealous that *you* don’t have a cool handshake.” Dustin shoots back.

“ Yeah. Cool.” Steve says nodding along.

Robin turns to El, and blurts out “ Is your leg better?!” When Eleven blinks in surprise she adds, “Sorry that was really blunt.”

“ It’s okay. But it has a scar, though.” She answers, rolling up her pant leg to show her.

“ Holy shit! You can tell everyone you got mauled by a bear! That’s major brownie points!” Robin says excitedly, upon seeing the scar.

El’s face twists in confusion. *Weren’t brownies a food that Joyce baked as a treat every once in a while?*

She looks at Will for help, “ B-brownie points?”

“ Uhh. It means that you can brag about it and stuff” He tried explaining. He would never be a teacher, he couldn’t explain well for shit.

She nods, slowly and unsure.

“ Alright. Welp. I’ve gotta get going.” She says and shouts, “ C’mon Harrington! I will not hesitate to tell Keith that the reason we’re late again is because you wanted to chit chat with your nerd friends!”

Steve follows her in a huff and Mike comments, “ She’s so weird.”

Will elbows him and says, “ I bet she could say the same thing about you, too.”

“ Hey! I can still take back my sweater!” Mike threatens, jokingly.

“ Yeah, right. You wouldn’t”

“ Fuck. You know me too well.”

“ C’mon you guys! We’re going to the arcade!” Max calls.

Will can feel himself growing anxious. He hasn't been *there* since the Mind Flayer.

But it's fine, *he's fine*.

Everything's gonna be fine.

**Notes for the Chapter:**

i had the chance to make some cute scene at the swingset, but did i take it?

no.



## 24. Shake me down-Cage the elephant

### Summary for the Chapter:

Will just half shrugs, before saying after a moment, "I don't know" he says finally, his voice cracking.

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=295056a30ec34911>

Will taps his foot anxiously against the ground. His eyes are darting around, desperately looking for *anything* to distract him. It's a fucking arcade, it shouldn't be *that* hard, but *shit*, he's so fucking paranoid. He *knows* that the Mind Flayer is gone, so why can't he get that into his head?!

The room's actually quite warm and stuffy, a result of shitty ventilation. It's not cold at the slightest, he should be *fine*. There is absolutely no reason he should be freaking out. But all his body remembers are the broken memories of the Mind Flayer's freezing venom, cursing through his veins, pounding at his head like a constant headache.

Fuck.

He needs to get away.

Lights have started to flicker, but few people are noticing. It's normal for an arcade to have an abundance of flashy lights.

Tears burn at the corners of his eyes, blurring his vision, making people look like lifeless blobs. Though, through his tears, he can see vines creeping up the sides of the games, making goose bumps crawl up his spine. Everything's growing dimmer and darker. And colder. All he sees is the distorted unreality of it all because he's back in the Upside Down.

He can't hear Dustin's cheers or Lucas' laughter. Only the

overwhelming silence that shrieks at him, almost mockingly. You're all alone it screams. He takes a step backward stumbling on a vine that's not even there, but his brain is telling him to run, to get away or else the vines will crawl up his legs, dragging him down until he's nothing.

“Will!”

He gasps sharply, and all the vines that were never there, disappear.

“ Are you okay?! What happened?” Mike asks, his eyes full of concern, scrutinizing him to make sure he’s okay.

“ Yeah. I’m okay.” He says, his voice uneven and shaky, although it comes out more as a whisper, “ I’m fine.”

Mike sits down beside him on the curb, because apparently Will *had* ran outside in the midst of his panic.

“ Hey. It’s okay if you aren't. You don’t have to pretend.” Mike says softly, rubbing circles on his back reassuringly.

“ I’m sorry.” Will whimpers, pulling his knees up to his chest, shrinking smaller. Fuck. He’s ruining everything. Can’t he just be normal, *for one day*?

“ You don’t need to apologize, you didn’t do anything wrong.”

Suddenly, Max, El, Lucas and Dustin burst outside, Dustin asking excitedly, “ Where’d you guys go?! The power went out! It was crazy-oh oops.”

*Shit. Of course the fucking power went out.*

He cuts off, seeing Mike’s worried expression and tears streaking Will’s face.

“ Apologize, dumbass!” Max hisses to him.

“Oh yeah, um, sorry guys.” Dustin says, giving them a sheepish smile.

“ It’s okay.” Will mumbles, purposely avoiding his gaze.

“ Are-are you okay?” El asks hesitantly and now everyone’s staring at him.

*Fuckkkk.*

Will can feel heat rising in his cheeks, in embarrassment. He hates feeling like this, like someone helpless little kid after some stupid nightmare.

“ Yeah. I’m fine.”

Mike can sense his discomfort and says “Will and I were about to head home”

"Oh okay, do you want us to come with you?" Lucas asks.

"Naw, it's fine. You can tell us later if the power comes back on." Mike says knowing full well that Will was the one that caused it

"Alright, see ya later." Lucas agrees hesitantly and they all say goodbyes.

Mike and Will start walking back to Mike's house, Will's eyes trained on the ground not daring to look up.

"Hey." Mike says, catching Will's hand and intertwining their fingers together "Do you wanna talk about it?"

So far Will hasn't mentioned anything about his newly found powers. Mike hadn't really asked much, in fear of overwhelming the boy. He knows that Will hates being bombarded with questions and Mike can't blame him, knowing how much his mom overprotects him. But he's barely mentioned anything about all the episodes he's getting, the *increased* amount of episodes, and Mikes definitely starting to worry.

Will just half shrugs, before saying after a moment, "I don't know" he says finally, his voice cracking.

He can feel the lump growing in his throat, and tears edge at his waterline.

Fuck, can't he not cry for like two seconds?

"I don't know," he whispers again.

"It's okay, you don't have to say anything if you want to"

"I do, it's just-" tears begin to slide down his cheeks. Fuck.

But soon he's sobbing, ugly, heavy tears, his whole body shaking. He can barely breathe, choking through gulps of air.

Mike's eyes widen in alarm and he does the only thing he can think of. He hugs him.

It kind of reminds him of when he and Will first met, years ago. After they had declared themselves friends, they decided to go play in the sandbox, and *of course* , Mike had tripped over air and scraped his knee. Will didn't know how to help him, all his mom ever did when *he* was hurt was cleaned the scrape, put on some ointment, slapped on a band-aid and gave him a hug, but he didn't have any of that stuff at the school playground, so he just hugged Mike. At first, it had caught him off guard, but it seemed to do the trick because his sniffles had subsided.

Will buries his nose into the crook, sobs racking his body. Mike grasps him tighter, whispering softly, "Hey, it's okay. Just let it out."

The sadness Will's tears hold makes Mike's heart heavy. He hates to see Will suffer, because he deserves the world. He didn't deserve to be possessed, or to be stuck all alone in a different dimension with a monster lurking around. He didn't deserve to be mentally and physically abused when he was younger.

Why couldn't some asshole like Lonnie or Brenner had this happen to *them*?

They stand hugging in the middle of the street, until Will's sobs come to a rest.

## 25. I think ur rlly cool-carpetgarden

### Summary for the Chapter:

Will blinks, stunned, before saying quietly, breaking the silence, “Oops.”

### Notes for the Chapter:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0OH317XdPqQTvNb8MbB1m6?si=47a0ca69d1384a9c>

Welp. Apparently crying does make you feel better. Because Will feels a shit ton better after crying, probably from holding off the urge to cry for so long. He feels weak when he does, and when his father still used to live with his family he had always said the same thing when he cried: “*Only fags and girls cry. Man up!*” He knew what his father used to say wasn’t true, everyone cried. But when he was little he had taught himself not to cry, and now it was even *still* hard-wired in him.

So when he let out all of his barricaded feelings, boy, did it feel good.

He feels perfectly fine now, better actually, a huge weight lifted off his shoulders. Like someone put a big heavy backpack on him, without him releasing it and when it got taken off it felt like a breath of fresh air.

Him and Mike walked home after that, their hands still intertwined. Neither of them mentioned it when they quickly separated when a random group of people walked by. It’s just how it is in Hawkins.

They got to Mike's house and talked and played Atari for a bit until Dustin's voice rang through his walkie-talkie.

“Mike, do you copy? Over.”

“Shit.” Mike mumbles getting off the couch, and Will gives him a lopsided smile before sliding off the couch as well.

“ Mike, Will, do you c-”

“ Yes, we copy. Over, “ Mike huffs, grabbing the walkie-talkie from the table.

“ Great! We just came home from the arcade and we’re at my house now. Over.”

“ You guys, *just* got home?!” Will repeats, incredulously, “You were there for almost-”

“Six hours!” Mike supplies, looking up from his watch.

“ Yeah, well we lost track of time. Max and I were having a Dig Dug tournament, and *I* was winning!”

“No you weren’t!” Max interrupted, “ And anyways, we taught El how to play she totally whupped both of our asses!”

Both Will and Mike turned to gape at each other in shock, “ El, beat you guys?” they exclaim in unison.

“ Yes!” El giggles proudly, through the walkie-talkie.

“Alright, alright.” Lucas cuts in, “ Get your asses over here!”

Mike snorts, “ Okay, okay! Over and out.”

Mike pulls down the antenna, setting it on the table again and they head upstairs almost crashing into Nancy when they open the front door.

“ Hey, Mike. Hey, Will.” She says, then arches an eyebrow at Mike, smirking slightly, only to receive a glare in return.

“Uh hi...?” Will replies, slightly confused.

Nancy snickers and Mike and Will go outside, shutting the door behind them.

“ What was that about?”

“ Ugh.” Mike groans, rubbing his face with his hand, “Since Nancy

knows about, well, us, she keeps on pestering me and shit.”

Will laughs, “ Aw that’s kinda sweet though. I forgot that she knew. You mentioned that in your letter, right?”

“ Yup.”

Will snorts, “ I still can’t believe you, of all people, wrote love letters.”

“ Hey!” Mike scoffs, swatting his arm, “ I didn’t mean to make it all lovey dovey and shit! It just sorta happened.”

“ Mhm, sure. So you’re telling me, that your pencil just happened to write, Will I love you, you’re the love of my life and blah, blah, blah. I think *you’re* the one who might’ve watched too many romance movies.” He teases.

Mike’s face turns bright red, “ I did not say that!” he protests.

“ Yeah, you’re right, you didn’t say it-”

“See, exactl-”

“ You wrote it.”

Mike’s mouth drops open, “ Oh my god! I can’t believe you!” his laughter ringing through the empty streets and Will gives him a cheeky smile.

It’s just dark enough that the street lights have just turned on and there’s barely any people around. Dark enough that they can hold hands, without the fear of some asshole noticing and giving them shit.

Or so they thought.

“Hey faggots!”

*Fuck.*

They both froze instantly, and when Troy walked into view Will

relaxed slightly.

Without James there, Troy was pretty harmless. Besides, it was two against one. Although Mike and Will weren't very athletic, neither was Troy.

"You guys are fucking disgusting." He spat.

Mike's face grew pale, all of his insecurities rising to the surface. He usually tries to ignore the nagging feeling in his mind reminding him that what he's doing is wrong. But now, Troy's reminding him of just that.

Will however, is having none of this. If he wanted someone to yell slurs at him, he would've just called up his dad.

"Oh, fuck off, Troy!" he says, flipping him off.

Mike turns his head quickly, to gape at him in surprise.

Even Troy's eyes widened before he stormed off, mumbling something inaudible under his breath.

Will blinks, stunned, before saying quietly, breaking the silence, "Oops."

"Holy shit, Will! I can't believe you said that!" Mike exclaims, slapping his hand over his mouth in amazement.

"Yeah... I didn't *mean* to say that." Will murmurs, still slightly in shock.

Mike lets out a big laugh, "How do you *accidentally* flip someone off and tell them to fuck off?!"

"I don't know!" Will smiles sheepishly.

"And I can't believe he ran away! What a pussy!"

"I know right! If I would've known he would just run away and *not* beat me up, I would've told him that years ago!"



Mike laughs again, “Well, you could’ve electrocuted him with your powers or something if things went bad, right?”

“ Yeah, I guess you’re right. I accidentally did that to Lonnie when he came for a ‘surprise visit’.” Will admits.

“ What?!” Mike yelps, “ Why did you never tell me that?!”

“ I dunno.”

“Well I’m glad you did. That asshole really deserves it.” he smiles and interlocks their hands together again, making Will blush.

*Oh God, he would never get sick of holding Mike’s hand.*

They finally reach Dustin’s house and they disconnect their hands, just before Mike presses a quick, chaste kiss to Will’s cheek, leaving them both with the fuzzy overwhelming feeling of happiness.

“ Hey guys! You’ll never believe what Will said to Troy!”

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

i give u full permission to be mad at me for making  
will ooc again, but i just love it when he doesnt give  
a fuck hfsdkfhks  
anyways, yea that's the end, thanks for reading :D